

75
Scripture Religion:

O R,
A Short View
O F T H E
FAITH and *PRACTICE*
O F

A True Christian,
A S

Plainly laid down in the *Holy*
Scriptures, and faithfully taught
in the *Church of England*.

H. Poole, Author
W I T H
Suitable Devotions.

By a Divine of the Church of England.

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44.

11. 20.

129.

THE PREFACE.

THE Ignorance, Infidelity and Wickedness of the Times in which we live, is too visible and notorious to be deny'd, and too great, scandalous and provoking, not to be bewailed and detested by all who profess themselves Christians. There are, God knows, too many who understand little or nothing of the very first Principles of our holy Religion; and others oppose and ridicule them, denying the Lord who bought them: But yet, I am afraid, it is too certain and sad a Truth, that there is a far greater multitude, who, professing to know God, yet, in their Works, do openly deny him; who pretending a great Veneration for the Christian Faith, yet live in a manifest Contradiction to it. To put a stop to this great Degeneracy and Corruption of the Age, is a Design so much for the Glory of God, and the Honour and Safety both of the Church and State, that it is every Man's Duty to promote and carry it on in his respective

A Place

Place and Calling, to the utmost of his Power.

I am very sensible, (and blessed be God for it) that some Endeavours have been used already to further and accomplish this great and good End : Among other Means for the attaining of it, it hath been thought expedient to put divers little Tracts, containing the Substance and chief Motives of Christianity into the hands of the People, as well to instruct them in the Knowledge of their Duty, as to engage them to the conscientious Practice of it ; and I hope there is a visible good Effect of them : There is some Reason to believe, that the Adversaries of our holy Religion are not ignorant of it ; and therefore they, in like manner, have very solicitously obtruded some of their short Schemes of Religion upon the World : Wherein much Art hath been used to impose upon ignorant, unwary and vitiously enclined Persons, by mixing much Falsehood with some Truth, by concealing or palliating known Errors, by mis-representing, disguising and corrupting the chief Principles of the Christian Doctrine : So that could we suppose an Apostle should rise from the Dead, and come among us, he would utterly disown these their Schemes, and profess they were nothing like the Religion

ligion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which heretofore, by his Commandment, he had preached to the World. I say, there is no doubt but he would disown and condemn them, because it evidently appears they are, in many respects, the very Reverse of those Writings which the Apostles have left to the World, as the authentick Records of the Doctrine which they every where taught, under the Influence and immediate Direction of the Spirit of Truth.

Now, though the impure and disorderly Lusts of Men are the true cause, yet the great Pretence for all this abominable Art, and Softning, is to render the Christian Religion more intelligible and rational. But alas! Christianity wants no such help; it is the most intelligible and rational Religion that ever appeared to the World. If indeed Men will consider it in a Cursory manner, and (as we speak) only by piecemeal, without taking a view of the whole, I do not wonder if some things do appear to such Superficial and half Considerers, liable to some sort of exception. But who soever will diligently attend to it in all its parts, and compare them together, and then take a comprehensive view of the whole, and dwell upon it, will soon find it intirely consistent with it self, and that it contains

contains an inexhaustible Treasury of Divine Wisdom and Goodness: That it is a Doctrine worthy of God to reveal, and deserves the kindest and most grateful acceptance from Men. Wisdom will be justified of all her Children, and when pretended new Lights, imaginary clearer Ideas, and all perverse Disputings of Men of corrupt Minds, shall vanish into Smoke and Nothing, it will be approv'd, remain victorious, and like its great Author, never know any end.

There needs nothing to recommend Christianity, and engage us to receive and love it, but to set it in a true Light, i. e. to represent it in its native Simplicity and Purity, as it is delivered in the Holy Scriptures, without any corrupt mixtures of our own vain Conjectures, and uncertain Opinions: And to do this, is the chief design of the following Papers. In Composing of which I had the Sacred Writings always in my Eye, and endeavoured to the best of my Skill, to lay the true Sense and Design of them before you, and have (agreeably to the Doctrine of our Church) proposed nothing relating either to Faith or Practice, as requisite and necessary to Salvation, but what I believe is Read therein, or may be proved thereby.

I know very well that this Subject hath been

been handled by many others, to very great advantage; nevertheless, when it was ask'd, I was not unwilling to cast my Mite into the Treasury of the Church, hoping for a favourable acceptance of it. I also remembered what is commonly observed, that a New Book, (either for the sake of some small difference in its Method and way of Expression, or meerly for its Novelty, or some other unknown cause) is sometimes Read and Considered, when a much better Book, for no other reason, but purely because it is an Old one, is either forgot or despised.

It is more than time to do all we can to recover the Spirit and Power of Religion, which so visibly languishes and decays among us. If any thing here offered shall in the least contribute towards the Instruction and Reformation of any Reader, I have my End, and heartily desire that God alone may have the whole Glory, for it is of his Grace alone that we are inclined and enabled to hear, obey, and profit to the Salvation of our Souls.

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Scripture Religion:

OR A
SHORT VIEW

OF THE
FAITH and PRACTICE

Of a True

CHRISTIAN, &c.

FOrasmuch as God Almighty, the wise and good Author of our Being, hath given to every man, that is born into this world, an excellent Spirit, Rational, and Immortal, endued with Freedom of choice, and the Government of his own actions, whereby he is an accountable Creature, capable of eternal rewards, or punishments in a future state, it is every mans duty and interest to consider and know, how, or by what means he may receive the one, and escape the other : Or in other words, 'tis every mans great concern to ask himself that serious and weighty Question, *What shall I do to be saved?* Acts 16. 30.

Forasmuch also as Mans Salvation is not in himself but in Jesus Christ alone, *there being no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,* it is equally every mans concern to know what it is that Jesus Christ him- Acts 4. 12.]

B

himself has done, and what it is that he requires of us to do in order to our Salvation.

For the more clear and full understanding of the former, *viz.* what that is, which Jesus Christ himself has done, in order to our Salvation, it is necessary to look back to our Original and Laps't State, the state in which God at first created us, and the state into which we fell.

Gen. 1. 27.

Now as to our original State, the Holy Scriptures teach us, that God at first *created man in his own Image*, approaching to the likeness of God in understanding and freedom of Choice : He endued him with the knowledge of his Duty, and gave him sufficient strength to perform it if he would ; and promised, if he did perform it exactly without committing any Sin, he would continue to him his present abilities, and that at length, he should be happy for ever. (For though there be no such promise directly expressed, yet we may reasonably conclude that it was implied : He that threatned death to disobedience, in effect promised life to obedience.) Moreover for the tryal of his obedience, he gave him one special Precept, commanding him *not to eat of the tree in the midst of the Garden*, threatning, *that in the day he eat thereof he should surely die*, *i. e.* become subject to misery and mortality. Man through the temptation of the old Serpent, *i. e.* the Devil, and through his own heedlessness, non-attention and credulity, disobeys God, by eating the fruit of that forbidden Tree, and thereby brings a curse upon himself

Gen. 2. 17.

Gen. 3. 3.

self and his Posterity ; subjecting them likewise to Death, and a heavy Condemnation, according to those famous words of St. Paul, *Rom. 5. 12. 13*
by one man Sin enter'd into the World, and death by Sin : and by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation. Thus Man's nature was ruined, and God's Justice offended : Man being become a Sinner, is deprived of God's Image, and liable to his Wrath ; and of himself is no more able to recover the one, than to deliver himself from the other, but grew more sinful, and more helpless, more disposed to evil, and less inclined to good ; more ignorant and wilful, earthly, and sensual, *vain in his imaginations, and without God in the World.* *Rom. 7. 24.* O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from the body of this death !

Bless'd be God the case is not desperate, and past recovery : God himself took the matter into his own Hand, and laid help upon one *John 3. 16.*
that is mighty. God so loved the world, that he *Matt. 1. 21.*
gave his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, to save *Rom. 8. 9.*
us from our sins, deliver us from his wrath, *1 Thess. 1. 10.*
and make us partakers of everlasting life and *1 John 5. 9.*
glory.

The Almighty Father from eternity (that he might undo this great Work of the Devil, and restore us to a state of purity, favour and happiness) entered into a Covenant with his well-beloved Son, in which it was concluded by them both, that the Son should take our Nature upon him, and *in the fulness of time* *Gal. 4. 4.*
appear in the World, perform a perfect obedience to the Will of God, and suffer whatsoever

*Acts 4. 28.**Isa. 52. 10.**Heb. 10. 9.*

ver his hand, and counsel determin'd should be done. The Father required that the Son should *pour out his Soul an Offering for Sin* : The Son reply's, *Lo I come to do thy Will O God.* The Father in consideration of the Obedience, and Sacrifice of his Son, with which he was well pleased, enters into a new and gracious Covenant with Man : Which consists as other Covenants do, of precious promises, or valuable considerations and benefits, to be convey'd, or made over on one part, and certain necessary Duties, or Conditions, to be performed on the other part, in order to the obtaining such Promises or Benefits. But what those Blessings or Benefits are which God promises to man, and what those Duties are which he requires of man, deserves and calls for our diligent and serious inquiry, because our everlasting Welfare depends upon the performance of such Duties : It being a very great, vain, and dangerous presumption, to expect or hope for the Benefits of the Covenant, unless we are careful to fulfil the Conditions of it.

Now the great, and inestimable Blessings, which are promised in the new Covenant, for the sake and merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, are, the pardon of Sin, the knowledge of our Duty, Ability or Grace to perform it, and eternal Life and Glory consequent upon such performance.

1. The pardon of Sin. That this is one special branch or part of the new Covenant, which was purchased and confirmed by the blood

blood of Christ, is manifestly proved from these, and such like places of Holy Scripture.

The Prophet *Jeremiab* (whose words are re- *Jer. 31. 31.*
cited by the Apostle to the Hebrews) decla- *Heb. 8. 12.*

ring the terms of the new Covenant, mentions this among the rest, *Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. When*

we were enemies, says the Apostle, *we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, making peace through the blood of his Cross, and by him reconciling all things to himself :* And the *Col. 1. 20.*

Blood of our Saviour is called the *blood of the New Testament which was shed for many for the remission of sins.* Remission of Sin

Matth 26. 28

1 Pet. 1. 19.

was the purchase of the Blood of the Son of God, and therefore through his Name the Apostles and their Successors, to the end of the World, are commanded to *preach forgiveness of sins* to Mankind. *Acts 13. 38.*

Now what an inestimable privilege is it, to be assur'd that we are at peace with God ! to know that he hath opened the Arms of his mercy to Mankind, and received them to a Capacity of favour ! This must needs fill the heart of every man that groans under the Burden of Sin, and the fears of Divine Wrath and Vengeance, with unspeakable joy and consolation.

It is true that from the light of Nature and from experience, we might conclude that God is very good and kind towards his Creatures, and might have some sort of hope, that

upon their repentance, he would be merciful to them, and overlook, or pass by their Transgressions : But this Hope, would be accompany'd with many misgiving fears, and much anxiety : There would be always some reason of doubting, whether God would actually pardon such a Sinner. For the same natural reason, which teaches that God is good, suggests also that he is Wise, and Just and Holy, and that he may assert and vindicate his Sovereign Dominion, and the Authority of his Laws, without any just impeachment to his goodness, it not being inconsistent with goodness it self to execute justice in the punishment of a Sinner. But in virtue of the new Covenant, all our fears of this kind are quite done away, our hearts are at perfect ease ; God himself hath *given us the knowledge of salvation in the remission of sins, according to his tender mercies, in which the day spring from on high ; the glorious Sun of righteousness, arising with healing in his wings did visit us.*

Luke 1. 77.

Mat. 4. 2.

2. Another great promise or blessing of the new Covenant, is an assurance that we shall be instructed in the knowledge of our Duty, or what it is that God requires of us, in order to favour and acceptance with him. To prove this I need refer you to no other places of Holy Scripture, but those which I before cited, out of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. *Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. This shall be my Covenant saith the Lord*

*Jer. 31. 31.
Heb. 8. 12.*

Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts — And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. Which promise was so abundantly fulfilled by the Preaching of our great Prophet, Christ Jesus, that none (who have the Gospel duly proposed to them) can be ignorant what they are to believe concerning God, and what it is that God requires of them ; unless they shut their eyes, and rebel against the Light because their deeds are evil. The Gospel contains so clear and perfect a Declaration of Gods Will concerning us, in order to our Salvation ; that in all things necessary to be known and done, it can be hid from none who live under it, but from such only, whose minds the God of this world hath blinded, least the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Job 24. 13.

2 Cor. 4. 4.

Now whosoever shall consider the deplorable ignorance of Mankind (especially as to propitiating and pleasing the Deity) the pernicious Errours, grievous mistakes, foolish conjectures, horrible superstitions and follies, with which they were deluded ; partly thro' their own vain reasonings, and corrupt and vile affections, and partly through the imposture and malice of evil Spirits, as also how various, uncertain, and unconstant they were to themselves, in all these things, must likewise readily acknowledge, this to be a very high and invaluable Priviledge and Blessing.

1 *Theff.* 4. 1.

For suppose we could have known that God was placable, or dispos'd and ready to forgive; yet unless we could likewise have known by what means, or upon what conditions he would forgive, we must have been fruitlessly busie, and endless in our inquiries, and filled with remediless perplexity and dissatisfaction of mind. For how could we have known the Will of God in this Case, till such time as he himself should please to reveal it. *Blessed therefore be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received how we ought to walk, and please God.* The clear and compleat Revelation he hath made concerning our Duty towards Him, is the support and satisfaction of our Hearts; especially when we consider the next Head, or part of the new Covenant, which contains,

3. The promise of Ability or sufficient Grace to perform the duties or conditions which it requires of us. To have known that God was merciful and willing to forgive. To have known likewise the Terms or Conditions upon which he was dispos'd, and ready so to do, without an explicit or clear knowledge of a Power to be conferr'd upon us, whereby we might be enabled to perform such conditions, so far as to be accepted, would have been so far from being a Blessing, or ministring any solid comfort to us, that it would have been a real foundation of wretchless perplexity, and everlasting despair. But herein behold the great grace and goodness of God towards us, he hath given us a very clear promise of sufficient strength, or power

power to perform what he requires of us. Now this ability or strength to do our duty arises

1. From the gracious relaxation, mitigation, or abatement of the rigour of the old Covenant : And

2. From the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

1. From the abatement or relaxation of the rigour and severity of the old Covenant. The old Covenant exacted perfect and unfinning obedience, and denounced an immediate Curse against the Transgressor. But the new or Gospel Covenant (though it enjoin the height or perfection of Vertue, God himself, who is absolutely holy and perfect, being proposed to us as our Pattern and Example, and though *in it the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men*) nevertheless assures us, that God considers all the infirmities of our present state, and for Christ's sake, will accept of less : He will accept of true Repentance for our past sins, and reckon sincere and hearty obedience to us, instead of absolute innocence and perfection. Sins of infirmity or meer human frailty, sins of invincible and unaffected ignorance and sudden surprize, which we are unfeignedly sorry for, and strive heartily against, according to the Tenor of the Gospel Covenant, do not *separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus*. Now to prove all this I need only to refer you again, to the aforementioned places of the Prophet *Jeremias*, and the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. Re-

Matth. 5. 48.

Rom. 1. 18.

Jer. 31. 31.

Heb. 8. 12.

Re- hold

hold the dayes come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel — I will put my Laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts — I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities will I remember no more. Where you see God plainly promises,

1. A rational, intelligible, and easie Law, neither difficult to be understood, nor impossible to be performed, but such as is nigh us, even in our mouths and in our hearts; and in case of failure in our obedience,

2. He promises to accept sincere Repentance, *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities will I remember no more* Which must be understood, under the condition of Repentance. For without this, we cannot suppose it reasonable for God to forgive: To forgive in such case seems repugnant and irreconcilable to his Sovereign Dominion, Wisdom, Justice, and Holiness. *But if any man sin and repent him truly of his sin, we have an Advocate with the Father even Jesus Christ the righteous.* And this is great and marvellous grace, and takes off very much from the difficulty of our Duty. Had God exacted absolute innocence and perfection, as the Condition of the New Covenant, considering the great frailty of our nature, the blindness of our understanding, the perverseness of our Will, the disorder and irregularity of our Passions and Affections, and all that vast variety, and innumerable multitude of temptations, which almost continually beset and importune us;

we

1 John 2. 1.

we might well, with amazement and despair, cry out, *Lord who can be saved?* But since there is an express and full declaration of Gods settled and immutable purpose, to save the Penitent, and sincerely Obedient, our fears in this case are done away: at least it is manifest, that no impossible task is enjoin'd us, yea it will appear that our work is comparatively very easie to be performed, if we duly consider, that not only the great rigour and severity of the Old Covenant is abated, but that

2. we have the promise of the Holy Spirit to work together with us, to further our honest and sincere endeavours, and carry them on to perfection. And this likewise is a Promise which tends greatly to our comfort in this weak, mortal state. For suppose we were absolutely assured that God were reconcilable, and let it be supposed likewise, that we as certainly knew the Terms upon which he would be reconciled, yet if it appeared to us, that either for want of a natural power in our selves, or from want of a power to be bestowed upon us, we were not able to come up to the Terms which were offered, so far as to be accepted, all the rest would avail us nothing. But thanks be to God, this is not our Case. We are assured, that the Holy Spirit is purchased for us, to carry us on through Faith unto Salvation. *God swore unto his servant Abraham, that he would grant, i. e. give power to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness.* And our blessed Lord hath told us, that our heavenly

Luke 1. 74.

11. 13.

1 John 4. 4.

venly Father is ready to give his holy Spirit to them that ask it of him. And we know that greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world. The Spirit of Christ abiding in us is a principle more mighty and powerful, than all the enemies of God's Glory and our Salvation. They are not so mighty to mislead, corrupt, and destroy, as he to direct, sanctifie, and save us. He can easily enlighten our minds, and bow and subdue our wills, guide and govern our Affections and Passions, soften our Hearts, and entirely captivate us to the obedience of the Gospel of Christ. Neither Sin nor Satan can hurt us, if we will follow his conduct, and be led by him. He will make us more than Conquerors, if we our selves are not greatly wanting to our selves, and to the Grace of God which is bestowed upon us. But what Heart can conceive the value of this Gift! Who knows what an inestimable Blessing it is, to enjoy the presence, direction, and assistance of Gods good Spirit! It becomes us to render all possible praise, adoration, and thanksgiving to God for bestowing so powerful a Helper and Advocate upon us: And then we should bow our knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named, that he would grant us according to the riches of his Glory to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, whereby we may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

Eph. 3. 14.

Phil. 1. 10.

Another great and precious promise of the new Covenant, is the promise of eternal Life

Life and Glory. *Life and immortality are brought to Light through the Gospel*; which discovers the certainty of it, and the way and means to attain it. Our merciful and gracious God, will not let us serve him for nought; nay he will reward our poor and imperfect services, with a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*, advancing us to joys that are pure in quality, and endless in duration, making us to drink of those *rivers of pleasure which are at his own right hand for evermore*. Says our Saviour, *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting Life*. St. John declares that *this is the promise, which He hath promised us, even eternal life*. And there cannot be more express words than those of St. Paul, that *the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

2 Tim. 1. 10.

2 Cor. 4. 19.]

Psalms 16. 11.

John 3. 16.

1 John 2. 25.

Rom. 6. 23.

These are the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel-Covenant, and what hath been observed, sufficiently shews with what disposition and temper we should receive and embrace them.

For when we consider our original State, how we were made in the Image of God, resembling our Maker in understanding and freedom of choice, in Purity, Spirituality, and Dominion over the Creatures: Can we forbear lifting up our Hearts and Voices towards our great Creator? Can we neglect to admire, adore and praise his Divine excellence and perfections? His Power in creating us out of nothing: His Wisdom in our ex-

Psa. 139. 15.

excellent and wonderful frame : His Goodness, in enduing us with so many noble and glorious faculties and powers of mind, and so many useful instruments of Action : We must be stupid and brutish indeed, if we are not hereby led to observe and consider, and celebrate the Divine perfections, and gratefully to ascribe all honour, glory and praise, to the Author of our being, crying out with the Devout Psalmist, *We will praise thee, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made : How precious have thy thoughts been towards us, how great is the sum of them !* If we should attempt to count them, *they are more in number than the sand, we can never reach any end of them.*

Jer. 9. 1.

But then on the other hand, when we consider the lapst and degenerate state of man, how he broke the Law of his Creation by disobeying his Maker ! how he plung'd himself into a sinful and miserable state ! lost his innocence, forfeited the favour of God, and became liable to his Justice : What heart so insensible and stupid as not to abhor and bewail his abominable presumption, treachery and ingratitude towards God, and his unnatural cruelty towards his own Soul ! Will not the pious Soul wish with the mournful Prophet, that his *Head were waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night* for the great dishonour which was done to God, and the injury which was done to Man. He that can consider how grievously God was provoked, and how intirely man was ruined, how sinful and helpless a Creature he made himself

self, how prone he is to evil, and how backward to all good, and neglects to abase himself, and humble and afflict his Soul before God, is a prodigious and amazing instance of the greatest degeneracy of human nature, having no regard either for God or Man, but being *like the bruit beast which hath no understanding, must perish.*

Psa. 32. 9.
49. 20.

But then again, when we turn our eyes from this sad and melancholly prospect, and behold the infinitely great and glorious God, notwithstanding this high provocation, contriving the Work of our Redemption. When we call to mind that he *gave his only begotten Son*, and sent him into the World to satisfy his own Justice, reconcile us to himself, and restore us to his favour, and to a capacity of eternal life, upon the most reasonable, gracious, and easie conditions; surely our *hearts will burn within us.* We cannot choose but praise, and magnifie, and love him above all things, who hath done such great things for us, who were so utterly unworthy of them: Surely with heart and hand, we will receive and embrace the offers of this great Salvation. Who do's not think it his duty to joyn with the Holy Psalmist, saying, *Bless the Lord O my Soul and forget not all his Benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.* Who is there that can forbear wellcoming the good news of a Saviour? Who would not receive the glad tidings of Salvation upon

Psal. 103. 23.

on any terms, much more upon those gracious terms which are proposed in the Gospel! And what they are I am now to declare.

Now the conditions of the new Covenant on our parts, or those duty's which it requires of us, in order to our partaking of the Benefits of it, are REPENTANCE, FAITH and OBEDIENCE.

1. REPENTANCE. God the Father *commands all men Now*, i. e. under the Gospel-dispensation, *every where to repent*. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, when he began to preach, said *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*. The Apostles every where, according to our Saviours command, preached Repentance in the Name of Jesus. And it is expressly threatned, that unless we do *repent we shall perish*, all which laid together, is abundantly sufficient to shew the necessity of this Duty. I go on to the next, which is

2. FAITH. That this is a necessary Condition of the Gospel Covenant is very plainly and fully proved, from those words of our Saviour. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*. And *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*. This is his commandment, i. e. his special and chief commandment, *that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*. And then

3. As to OBEDIENCE. This is as necessary as Repentance and Faith, and that

1. As

1. As it implies a ceasing from sin, as appears from those well known words of Saint Paul, *Let every one that names the name of Christ, i. e. Every one that professes himself a Disciple of Christ depart from iniquity*, and if they refuse or neglect so to do, must expect to hear those dreadful words pronounc'd against them at the great day, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know ye not.* 2 Tim. 2. 19.

Matth 7. 23.

2. As to that part or branch of Obedience which consists in doing well, nothing can be more certain than that this is required of us, to intitle us to the Benefits or Blessings of the new Covenant. Says our Lord himself, who came to declare his Fathers will concerning our Duty and Happiness: *If thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandments.* And again, *Then are ye my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.* And not every one that says Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he which doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. And whosoever says, he knows God, but keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him. No man, who reads, considers and understands, these and such like places of Holy Scripture (and 'tis not hard to understand them) but must confess that Repentance, Faith and Obedience, are necessary Conditions required on our part, to make us capable of receiving the grace of the Gospel. And since they are of such absolute necessity, it is the more needful distinctly to understand their Nature and Properties; and I begin with the first,

Matth 19. 17.

John 15. 14.

Matth 7. 21.

1 John 2. 4.

viz.

C

I. Re

Psal. 38. 18.
Ex. 9. 6.
Jer. 3. 25.
Dan. 9. 5.
Luke 18. 13.
Joh. 34. 32.
Prov. 28. 13.

1. REPENTANCE, By which I understand a turning from Sin, and turning unto God : Or in other words, it is a thorough change of heart and mind, arising from a deliberate rational conviction, or sense of the great Evil and Danger of Sin, which is always accompany'd with sorrow, shame, and confusion of face, for the commission of it, together with a free, and humble confession and acknowledgment of our guilt, and a judicious, settled, permanent resolution, and sincere and diligent endeavours to do so no more ; the effect of all which is the actual forsaking of it, and doing better for the time to come. But to treat of the actual forsaking of Sin, and the practice of our Duty in its whole latitude and extent, will fall under the head of Obedience, where it shall be consider'd at large. I proceed therefore to the next condition of the Gospel-Covenant, which is

2. FAITH. Now there is scarce any Duty of our holy Religion, which hath been more perplexed, and obscured with doubtful disputations, and nice subtilties than this : And yet in all reason one would think it were a thing which should be easie and plain to every Capacity, so much stress being laid upon it : It being made as necessary to the Salvation of the meanest Peasant, as the greatest Prince, and most profound Philosopher in the World. I will not trouble you therefore with any of these niceties, but deliver very plainly in a few words what I take to be its true notion.

Now

Now Faith in Christ is a rational, firm, and effectual Assent to the whole Gospel-Revelation : Or (in a little more restrained sense) a settled perswasion that the Doctrines deliver'd in the Gospel, are infallible Truths, which God the Father has made known to the World by his Son Jesus Christ, and confirmed by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost. The genuine effect of which perswasion is, a due sense of our obligation to receive all such Truths, together with a fixt resolution and endeavour to govern our hearts and lives, according to the true and evident meaning and importance of them.

Job. 9. 33.

Acts 2. 41.

John 1. 49.

Heb. 2. 3.

This being so, we are very nearly concern'd to enquire into the matter of our Faith, or what those Doctrines are, which more especially we are oblig'd to believe with our hearts, and confess with our mouths in order to our Salvation.

Rom. 10. 9.

Now because the Bible is a large Volume, containing very great variety of things, of a very different nature and importance, and some want Ability to read, and others Capacity to understand, and select, the Principal and most necessary points of Doctrine: The Church to assist and direct such as these, (duly considering and attending to the form of Baptism, wherein there is a distinct manifestation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and a solemn acknowledgment of them, as the objects of our Faith and Worship) did very early collect and compile, a short Summary of such heads of Doctrine, as were most necessary to be known and believ'd concerning

2 Tim. 1. 13.
Heb. 6. 1.

the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and required that every person should profess his unfeigned hearty Assent to them, before she admitted them into her Communion. And this, as many not without some reason, suppose was that *form of sound Words*, and those *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ* mention'd in the Epistle to *Timothy* and the *Hebrews*: However this be, the use of Creeds, or short Summaries of the Christian Faith is very ancient and useful, and great respect is due to such Compositions, and amongst the rest the Creed, called the Apostles, challenges a peculiar and principal regard.

1. Because it is very full and comprehensive, omitting no necessary fundamental point of meer Belief, properly so call'd, as is allow'd by the best Writers, Ancient and Modern.

2. Because it is penn'd with great simplicity and plainness, and its Doctrines are intirely Apostolical, so that the whole and every part of it, may be clearly proved from the Writings of the Apostles: Which being so, 'tis requisite and necessary to explain the sense, and lay the true meaning and importance of each Article of the Creed before you.

Bish. Pearson.
Dr. Barrow.

I am not ignorant that many excellent persons have explained the Creed with great accuracy, judgment and piety, (and I freely acknowledge my self very much indebted to their labours) but because their explanations, are either too large, or less suited to Vulgar Capacities, I hope, it will not be lost labour

labour to offer a very short and practical Paraphrase to such as these.

When therefore we rehearse the Articles of the Creed, we ought to suppose that we make this or the like Profession.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.

Article I.

I am fully persuaded in my heart, and do willingly confess with my mouth, that it is a certain and infallible truth, that there is an infinite and independant Being, the Father of all things, especially of Angels and Men, but more peculiarly and eminently the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there is but one such Being, who by his Almighty Power made the Heaven and the Earth, all things visible and invisible, out of nothing, and Preserves and Governs the things which he hath made.

Rom. 10. 9.

Rom. 1. 20.

1 Cor. 8. 6.

1 Pet. 1. 3. 4.

Matth. 3. 17.

1 Cor. 8. 4.

Deut. 6. 4.

Rom. 11. 36.

Acts 17. 24.

Col. 1. 16.

Heb. 1. 3.

Heb. 11. 3.

Rev. 4. 11.

Psa. 104. 24.

Dan 2. 20.

Psa. 77. 12.

Luke 12. 4. 5.

Hos. 3. 5.

Psal. 73. 24.

And in consequence of this belief, I do acknowledge that it is my Duty to bow myself before the Majesty of this infinitely glorious Being, my great Creator and Preserver, to admire his Wisdom, fear his Power, contemplate his Works, adore his Providence, praise and love his Goodness, and esteem nothing in Heaven or Earth in comparison of him, and thus I resolve to do whilst I have any being.

Article II. **And in Jesus Christ, his Only Son,
our Lord**

Matth. 1. 21.

Deut. 18. 15.

Dan. 9. 26.

Isa 61. 1.

Luke 4. 21. 22.

Psal. 110. 4.

Eph. 5. 2.

Rom. 8. 34.

Acts 3. 26.

Luke 1. 32.

John 1. 49.

17. 5.

1. 18.

1 Cor. 8. 6.

Eph. 4. 5.

Eph. 1. 21, 22.

ANd as I thus believe that God is, and that there is but one God, so likewise I am fully perswaded, and freely acknowledge, that it is a necessary and infallible Truth, that there was, and is a Man, who by the Ministry of an Angel was called Jesus, who according to the meaning of that name, is the Saviour of the World, that great Person whom God the Father promis'd, and the Prophets foretold, to be the Messias, the Redeemer of *Israel*, anointed by the Holy Ghost, to be our great Prophet, Priest and King ; our Prophet to teach us the Will of God, concerning our Duty and Happiness ; our Priest to reconcile us to God, and interceed for us and bless us ; and our King to Rule, Govern and defend us : And this Jesus, the Saviour and Messias, is the true, proper, natural Son of God, begotten of the Substance of the Father before all Worlds, and that no other is in such manner the Son of God, as he is, who also is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Lord of Life and Glory, neither is there any Lord that may be compared with him : For as he is the everlasting Son of the Father, he is invested with a Sovereign and Universal Dominion over all things, and as he is the Messias, he is *exalted above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come, the Father having*

having put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the Church.

And being thus perswaded in my heart, I plainly perceive and see, how much it is my duty and interest, with all grateful affection, stedfast faith, and cheerfulness of heart, to look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, to hear his Doctrine, obey his Precepts, embrace his Promises, rely upon his performances, and give him my whole heart, understanding, will, and affections, that he may rule in it absolutely by his Spirit, and in due time, translate me to his Heavenly Kingdom. I see also my obligation, to ascribe all honour, blessing, glory, and power to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. I see it is my duty to honour the Son, even as I honour the Father; and thus to do is the deliberate, and I trust unchangeable purpose of my heart, for unless I honour the Son, I cannot honour the Father who hath sent him.

Heb. 12. 2.

2 Cor. 10. 4.
Rom. 14. 7, 8.

Rev. 5. 13.

John 5. 23.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

Article III.

I Am further perswaded in my heart, and do confess with my mouth, that the Only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all Worlds, did in the fulness of time, by a temporal generation become Man, according to the appointment of the Father and his own free choice, assuming to himself the Humane Nature, and uniting it to the

Gal. 4. 4.
John 1. 14.

Heb. 2. 16.
1 Tim. 3. 16.

Divine, in a marvellous and incomprehensible manner, which Incarnation of the Son of God, was the work of the Holy Ghost, by whose immediate operation and influence, he was conceived in the Womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of Her, a Woman of the Seed of *Abraham*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, and of the Family of *David*, who still continued a pure and undefiled Virgin, whereby Jesus our Saviour did really partake of our Nature, a reasonable Soul, and humane Body, without any pretence, or shadow of the least depravation of it.

Matth. 1. 2.

Luke 1. 35.

Heb. 7. 14.

Matth. 1. 1.

Rom. 1. 3:

2 Cor. 5. 21.

John 3. 16.

Tit. 3. 4.

Luke 1. 78.

Heb. 7. 26,

Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8.

And because I do thus believe, I see all the reason in the World to admire, adore, and praise the infinite love of the Father, in thus sending his Son into the World, and the wonderful condescension, obedience and love of the Son in coming from Heaven for us Men, and for our Salvation, and the marvellous power and goodness of the Holy Spirit, in preparing a Body for him, in which he might accomplish the Will of the Father, in the Work of our Redemption. I am constrained to pray and endeavour, that I may be holy, harmless, undefiled as he was, and that the same humble, obedient, and charitable mind may be in me, which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a Servant, and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross: For

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, Dead, and buried. Article IV.

I Do sincerely believe, and profess, that it is a most necessary and infallible truth, that the Only begotten Son of God (for the satisfaction of Divine Justice, and the Redemption of Mankind, and to confirm the truth of his Doctrine, and to set us an example of the greatest humility, patience, fortitude and resignation) did in his humane Nature, *i. e.* in his Soul and Body, undergo most exquisite, Inexpressible, and unknown sorrows and suffering. For it is a truth which can't be denied, that he being *by the determinate Counsel and Fore-knowledge of God* sent to the Jews; they through the treachery of *Judas*, and the envy, malice, and wickedness of their own hearts, deliver'd him to *Pontius Pilate*, the Governour of *Judea*; who notwithstanding he had pronounced him innocent, yet to please the Jews, delivered him to the painful and shameful death of the Cross, upon which, having hung for the space of several hours, by the force and violence of the torments which he felt, he breathed out his innocent Soul, whereby his Body was as much bereft of all vital Operation, as the body of any other man whose Soul is separated from it: And afterwards according to the decent and laudable custom of God's people, was laid in the Sepulchre or Grave, and made his grave among the

Joh 17. 19.

Isa. 53. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 24.

1 Joh 5. 8.

Col 1. 24.

Phil. 2. 6, 7.

Matth. 26. 38.

Acts 2. 23.

Matth. 27. 18.

Matth. 27. 1, 2.

24.

Luke 23. 24.

Luke 23. 33.

Mark 15. 39.

Rich

John 19. 39.

Isa. 53. 9.

Ал, 20. 28.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Eph. 5. 2.

Gal. 5. 24.

2 Cor. 5. 14 15.

Marb. 10. 33.

Heb. 3. 12.

Tit. 1. 16.

1 Pct. 2. 21.

Eph. 5. 2.

John 13. 13.

Rich, as was foretold by the Prophet.

And this being my Faith, from hence I clearly see the infinite justice, purity, and holiness of God, the deplorable state of sinful Man, and the unconceivable evil of Sin, which God would not forgive but through the Sacrifice of his own Son : All which considerations do amaze and confound my guilty Soul. But then when I remember and consider the great dignity of the Person that suffer'd, that the Blood which was shed for the expiation of Sin, was the precious Blood of the Son of God, my fears, are done away, I know that this was a Sacrifice which was infinitely meritorious and well-pleasing, and I intirely trust to the virtue and power of it : This love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, constrains me to love them above all things, and be thankful to them, to crucifie my vile lusts and affections, to dye to Sin, and to live to him who died for me, and to die for him rather than to deny him, by *an evil heart of unbelief*, or an ungodly conversation : I will strive to imitate him in his tender pity and compassion, his humility, meekness, patience, contentedness under his sufferings, and intire resignation to the Will of God, and thus I am resolv'd to do to my lives end.

Article V. **He descended into Hell, the third day
He rose again from the Dead.**

AND as this is my Faith and Confession concerning the Sufferings, Crucifixion,

on, Death, and Burial of Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, and the Saviour of the World, so do I further believe and confess, that he continued in the state of the Dead for a certain time, his Body lay in the Grave or Sepulcher, and his Soul went to the place, habitation, or mansion of departed Spirits. But *his Soul was not left there, neither did his Body see corruption*, for the third day from his Death, by the infinite, and irresistible Power of the Divinity (which was never separated from his Body or Soul) he took up the life, which he had laid down, the same Soul was reunited to the same Body, and he lived again, the very same Man he was before his death, and can die no more.

John 19. 41.

Acts 2. 25, 27.

1 Cor. 15. 4.

Acts 2. 24.

John 10. 18.

Rom. 6. 9.

Rev. 1. 18.

And since it is a Truth beyond contradiction, that Jesus continued in the Grave, for such a space of time, I am abundantly convinced that he was truly dead, and since he continued there no longer than Three Dayes, I am assured of this Truth, and his Goodness: His Truth in fullfilling his Promise, His Goodness in the speedy removal of that sorrow which had fill'd his Disciples Hearts. Above all, the Resurrection of Jesus assures me, that God is reconciled and Death destroyed, *for if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* Since Christ is risen I see my obligation, to endeavour to find the power of his Resurrection in my self, exciting me to walk in newness of life, and to seek the things which

John 2. 19.

John 16. 22.

Rom. 5. 10.

Heb. 2. 14.

Rom. 8. 11.

Phil. 3. 10.

Rom. 6. 4. 5.

which

Phil. 3. 10. *which are above, where Christ sits at the right*
Rom. 6. 4, 5. *Hand of God; for I am taught by the next*
Col. 3. 1, 2. *Article of the Creed;*

Article VI. He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

I Do heartily believe, and stedfastly profess, that Jesus the only begotten, and eternal Son of God, after he arose from the dead, and had convers'd with his Disciples for forty days, did really and truly in his humane Nature, in the very same Soul and Body in which he arose, visibly ascend in the presence of many Witnesses, and went into the highest Heaven, the Place of the more peculiar presence of the Divine Majesty and Glory. Where appearing before God, for the Obedience and Merit of his Sufferings, he is exalted to a state of the highest felicity, dignity, and power, being plac'd at the right hand of his Father, the everlasting and only Potentate, the Original and Fountain of all Might and Power, who has invested him with supream Authority and Dominion over his Church, for the preservation and Government of it, and with an absolute Power to destroy all his and our Enemies, which being destroy'd, his Mediatorial Office will cease, and *God shall be all in all.*

Which persuasion fills my heart with unspeakable joy and consolation. It is the joy and satisfaction of my heart, that my dearest

est Lord and Saviour, who suffered in such a barbarous and unworthy manner, is advanced to such a glorious and happy state. I assure my self he will use his Power with his Father to the behoof and advantage of all his faithful Friends and Followers : And how does the consideration hereof, raise my thoughts and affections above the vain, empty, perishing things of this World, and place them upon the things which are above ? How do I already in Soul and Spirit, ascend into Heaven ? How do I long for that happy day, wherein I shall see my dearest Redeemer in all his Glory ? I acknowledge the Authority of this great Prince and Saviour, I submit to his power, receive his Promises, trust to his intercession, hoping that where he is, there in Gods appointed time, I shall be also, rendring all Blessing and Honour, Service and Obedience to him for evermore.

Eph. 1. 20, 21.

*Heb. 2. 17.
7. 25.*

Col. 3. 1. 2.

2 Tim. 4. 8.

Acts 5. 31.

*John 12. 26.
14. 3.
Rev. 5. 13.*

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

Article VII.

ANd as I am perswaded in my heart and do confess with my mouth, that Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, is ascended into Heaven in our Nature, and *exalted at the right hand of God to be a Prince and a Saviour.* So in like manner, I do believe and profess, that the only begotten and eternal Son of God, who visibly in our Nature, in the presence of many credible Witnesses, did ascend into Heaven, shall in like manner in the same

Hu-

- Acts* 1. 11. Humane Nature, at an appointed Day, come
 17. 31. from Heaven in power, and great glory, and all
Matth. 16. 27. the Holy Angels with him, and placing himself
 25. 31. upon the Throne of his glory, with the voice of an
 Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God, shall
 1 *Thess.* 4. 16. in the most commanding manner, summon,
Acts 10. 42. and gather all Nations before him, both the
John 5. 28, 29. Quick and the Dead. All that shall be then a-
 live, and all that before that Day were dead,
 Young and Old, High and Low, Rich and
 Poor, Righteous and Wicked, all without
 distinction and exception, and cause them
 to appear before his Judgment-Seat, and ex-
 act an account of their whole Behaviour, and
 try them in Truth, Righteousness and Equi-
 ty, according to their works done in the
 Flesh, whether Good or Bad. Upon the
 Righteous he will pronounce a Sentence of
 Absolution, saying, *Come ye Blessed of my Fa-*
ther, receive the Kingdom prepared for you from
the foundation of the World. But upon the
 Wicked He will pass a Sentence of Condem-
 nation, saying to them, *Depart from me ye*
 Cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the
 Devil and his Angels.
 And this being my Faith, I confess to all
 the World, that I am abundantly satisfied
 in the present dispensations of Gods Provi-
 dence, and will never murmur against them,
 knowing that a Day is a coming, wherein God
 will make it appear, that he is righteous in all
 his Ways, and holy in all his Works. Seeing
 God will bring every work into judgment with
 every secret thing, I will watch all the motions of
 my heart, and consider all my ways: I resolve

to be sober and serious, sincere and honest, to repent of my past Sins, and for the time to come to keep a Conscience void of offence towards God and Man : and this will render this great and terrible Day of the Lord, a Day of Joy and Rejoycing, for if I am found thus doing, my Judge himself will be my Advocate, he will plead my Cause, and interceed for me, and *who then can condemn me.* Blessed be the Almighty Father, for appointing my Saviour and Redeemer to be my Judge, who will compassionate all my infirmities, and judge me in Truth and Equity, and not according to strict Justice.

Acts 17. 31.

24. 16.

Rom. 8. 34.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

Article VIII.

ANd as I believe thus concerning the Almighty and independent Father, and his Eternal, Only begotten Son Jesus Christ, *one Father of all, and one Lord by whom are all things.* So I am fully perswaded in my Heart, and do sincerely and freely confess with my Mouth, that there is an Infinite, Eternal, and Almighty Spirit, who in a peculiar and incomprehensible manner, received the whole Divine Nature, Essence, and Perfections from the Father and the Son, whose Spirit he is, and yet is neither the Father, nor the Son, but a Third Person, really distinct from both, proceeding from both, sent by both, and in Common with the Father and the Son, is the Author of our Salvation. Which Infinite and Eternal Spirit being perfectly

Eph. 4. 6.

2 Cor. 8. 6.

1 John 5. 7.

Matth. 28. 19.

2 Cor. 13. 14.

Heb. 9. 14.

Psal. 139. 7.

John 15. 26.

14. 16.

1 Pet. 1. 2.

1 Cor. 6. 11.

Rom. 1. 4.

2 Theff. 2. 13.

John 16. 13.

Gal. 5. 25.

Rom. 8. 14.

1 Pet. 1. 8.

Rom. 15. 13.

8. 15.

1 Cor. 12. 12.

13.

1 Cor. 6. 17.

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1 John 4. 4.

1 John 5. 7.

fectly and absolutely Holy in himself, is the Author of all Holiness in us, enlightning our understandings by the Knowledge of the Truth, subduing our wills, purifying our passions and affections, cherishing all the good motions and inclinations of our Hearts, leading us in our actions, supporting us in our difficulties, *filling us with all joy and peace in believing*, assuring us of *the Adoption of Sons*, assisting us in our Devotions, *whereby we cry, Abba Father*: And being thus purified in Soul, Body, and Spirit, by his powerful Influence and Operation, we are united to Christ our Head, and Members one of another, and made meet to partake of Gods favour and Life everlasting.

And being thus perswaded, I readily and freely own my obligation to Admire, Bless, and Praise the everlasting Father, and his Only begotten Son Jesus Christ, for bestowing such an inestimable Gift, such a Wife, Powerful, and Gracious Helper and Advocate upon us: I acknowledge it my indispensable Duty to render all Honour, Adoration and Worship, to this Divine Spirit, together with the Father and the Son, one infinitely Glorious and Ever-blessed God. I will earnestly pray for his presence and assistance, receive him into my Heart, and let him Rule there by his mighty and gracious Influence and Operations. I will hearken to his Admonitions, follow his Guidance, comply with all his good Motions, and rejoyce in the Light and Heat, which at any time he shall please to excite and kindle in my Soul:

I resolve in no case either to tempt or to *grieve him*, by any impure disorderly Lust or Passion, Speech or Behaviour, but will receive him, and carry my self towards him, with all humility, reverence, dutiful regard, and affection, as becomes me towards so great a Guest, who is so much my Friend and Benefactor, and thus through his help (which I daily implore) I am resolved to do as long as I have any Being.

Acts 9. 9.
Eph. 4. 30.
1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.

The Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints.

Article IX.

I Am further firmly perswaded in my Heart, and do freely confess with my Mouth, that our Lord Jesus Christ, by his own Preaching, and by the Preaching of the Apostles, under the direction, and through the assistance of the Holy Ghost, did gather to himself a multitude of Persons, who believing the Doctrine which was delivered to them, were by Baptism incorporated into a Society, under Jesus Christ its Head, for the visible profession of the same Doctrine, which Society of Believers is federally, and really Holy, and Universal, not being confin'd to one Nation, but according to our Lords Institution and Precept, is to be spread over the World, and successively to be increased by the continual addition of such as shall believe and be saved to the end of the World. And I do likewise believe, that all such Persons, as are thus called of God, and united to

Matth. 16. 18.
28. 19.

Rom. 12. 5.
1 Cor. 12. 12,
13.
Eph. 1. 22.
Acts 2. 42, 47.
1 Cor. 1. 2.
Rom. 1. 7.
Mark 16. 15.
Eph. 5. 27.

D

Christ

- 1 John 1. 3.** Christ by his Holy Spirit abiding in them,
1 Cor. 12. 12, and sanctifying their Souls and Bodies, have
13. Fellowship with God the Father, Son, and
1 John 1. 7. Holy Ghost, being admitted to their Friend-
1 Cor. 12. 26. ship, Care, and Love, and that they have
 likewise a very intimate and close Union
 and Fellowship one with another, as living
 Members of the same Body, embracing one
 another with sincere good will and affection,
 and with mutual pity and compassion, hear-
Acts 2. 42. ing the same Word, receiving the same Sa-
 craments, offering their united Prayers, to
 the same God, by the same Mediator, through
 the Assistance of the same Spirit, endeavour-
1 Tim. 2. 9. ing to keep this Union and fellowship invi-
Eph. 6. 18. olable, by a due, orderly, and ready sub-
 mission to a decent, regular, and edifying
1 Cor. 14. 40. Discipline.

- And this being my Faith. I bless the God,
 and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for ad-
 mitting me a Member of this Holy Society,
 and to a right to partake in all those inestima-
 ble Priviledges he has promised to it. I see how
 I am united to him, and to my Fellow-Chri-
Eph. 4. 3. stians, and will endeavour to keep the Unity
 of the Spirit, in the bond of Peace, taking
 heed of every pernicious Error, and wicked
 Practice. Avoiding *false teachers, and de-*
1 Cor. 1. 10. *ceitful workers who cause divisions and offences,*
 behaving my self piously, and peaceably,
 as becomes a Member of so Holy, and Friend-
 ly a Society.

The forgiveness of Sins.

Article X.

I Do likewise most firmly believe, and sincerely confess, that all Mankind having sinned against God, became liable to his Justice, and a severe Condemnation, and being utterly unable to make any satisfaction for their Offences, and save themselves; the Almighty Father took pity and compassion upon us, in this our miserable State, and gave his Son, and the Eternal Son gave himself, *a Ransom and a Sacrifice for us.* By performing an Obedience, Worthy of his Fathers acceptance, and by bearing our Sins in his own body upon the Cross, and there *Offering Himself, through the Eternal Spirit, a Sacrifice without spot unto God,* he fully satisfied Divine Justice, reconciled us to God, and Redeemed us from everlasting Punishment. For this Obedience and Suffering of the Son was so acceptable to God, that thereupon, he engag'd himself in a Solemn Covenant, to forgive the Sins of all, who Believe and Repent. And our Lord himself commanded his Apostles, to preach Repentance, and Remission of Sins in his Name, among all Nations, and Ordained the Sacrament of Baptism, as a visible Sign, Earnest, and Pledge to assure us thereof.

Rom. 3. 23.
5. 18.

John 3. 16.
Matth. 20. 28.

Heb. 9. 26.

1 Pet. 2. 24.
H. b. 9. 14.

2 Cor. 5. 19.
Eph. 1. 7.

Luke 24. 47.

Acts 2. 38.

And this being my Faith, I see, and own my Obligation, to hate Sin, and stand in awe of Gods Justice : But especially am constrained to admire his Mercy, and praise his

- Mar. 12. 30.* Goodness, and love him, and my Dear Redeemer, with all my Heart, and with all my Soul, and with all my Strength, who have loved me, so as never Man loved his Friend.
- Rom. 5. 8, 9.* How gladly do I receive the news of a Pardon? *How beautiful are the feet of those who bring these Glad Tidings?* How do I honour the *Ministers of Reconciliation*, by whom they are proclaimed, and accept the Signs, and Seals of a Pardon, with all possible thankfulness, and thus will I do to my lives end.
- 2 Cor. 5. 19.*

Article XI.

The Resurrection of the Body.

- M**OREOVER, it is a special and principal Article of my Faith, that as *by the Disobedience of the first Adam, Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by sin* (it being appointed to all men once to die) so by the meritorious Performances and Power of the second Adam, *Death it self our last Enemy shall be destroyed.* For *the hour is coming wherein the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven, with a shout, the voice of an Arch-angel, and the Trump of God, and all that are in their graves, all that ever died, shall come forth and live again.* The Flesh which was separated from the Soul at the Day of Death, shall then be reunited to it, each Soul shall have its proper Body, and every one thus raised, shall see and perceive, that it is he himself that is risen, and not another, and of these that are so raised, some shall come forth to the Resurrection of Life, and others to the Resurrection of
- Rom. 5. 12.*
- 1 Cor. 15. 22.*
- v. 26.*
- 2 Thess 4. 16.*
- John 5. 28.*
- Rev. 20. 13.*
- 2 Cor. 4. 14.*
- 18.*

of Damnation. The Bodies of such who rise to Life, shall be Glorious, Spiritual, Powerful, and Immortal Bodies. The Bodies which rise to Damnation, shall be prepar'd and qualified, to endure whatsoever punishment, Almighty Justice and Vengeance, shall think fit to inflict upon them. 1 Cor. 15. 42.

And being thus perswaded, I admire the great grace of God, which shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. I adore the congruity of the Divine Justice, in rewarding, or punishing the very same Body, according as it was a Servant of righteousness, or iniquity. I resolve to the very utmost of my power, to keep my Body pure and undefiled, in Temperance, Soberness, and Chastity, that it may be a Temple or fit Mansion for the Holy Ghost; nothing doubting but if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the Dead dwell in me, He that raised Christ from the Dead shall also quicken my mortal body by his Spirit that dwelleth in me. Rom. 5. 211
Rom. 6. 18.
1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.
Rom. 8. 11.
And thus to believe, and thus to do, is the unchangeable resolution and purpose of my Heart.

The Life Everlasting. Amen. Article XII.

HAVING thus profest my Belief concerning the Resurrection of the Just and Unjust, I am further perswaded in my heart, and do willingly confess with my mouth, that the Unjust after their Tryal and condemnation, shall be thrust from the favour, and Matth. 25. 41. 46.
blissful

Rev. 14. 10, 11.

2 Thess. 1. 7, 8,

9.

Mark 9. 43.

Math. 25. 34.

John 6. 47.

1 Pet. 5. 4.

1 John 3. 2.

Rev. 21. 4.

Dan. 12.

Psal. 17. 15.

John 10. 28.

Eph. 1. 3.

1 Cor. 2. 9.

Rev. 21. 22.

Math. 25. 41.

Rev. 20. 10.

2 Ed. John 8.

blissful presence of the great and glorious God, into a state of inconceivable horror, and anguish, shame and confusion, where they shall undergo most exquisite, intollerable, endless Torments, without any possibility of escape, by dying any more. But the Just after their Tryal and Absolution shall be admitted to *the joy of their Lord*, a state of the highest dignity, comfort and glory; where they shall behold their Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter, in a perfect freedom from all manner of corruptibility and decay, weakness and dis temper, sin and sorrow, enlightned in their Understanding, rectified in their Will, satisfied in their Appetites, and absolutely secure, for ever falling from this happy and glorious state.

And this being my Faith, how do *I bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blest us with all spiritual Blessings in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus; and prepared such great, good things, as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath enter'd into the Heart of man to conceive, for them that love him!* How doth my thirsty Soul breath, and pant after the enjoyment of them! And how carefully ought I to demean my self, least by willful acts of impiety and wickedness, I fall short of them, and be condemn'd to the dismal society of the Devil and his Angels, into the Lake of fire and brimstone, there to be *tornmented day and night for ever and ever!* The hope of everlasting Life engages me to *look to my self, that I lose not the things I have wrought, but that I receive a full reward;* and the fear of

of everlasting death constrains me to despise all Earthly Pleasures and Profits, all the terrors, threatnings, and persecutions of Life, and to fear him only, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell. Yea, him I am resolved to fear, Amen.

Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3.

Luke 12. 4. 5.

Thus, O Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief, Amen.

This is a short, plain, and practical Account of the great Articles of the Christian Faith. From which it appears, that the Doctrines of our Religion, are not meer Speculations, and high Notions, to entertain and amuse our understandings, but are to be considered as Principles, to affect our Hearts and govern our Lives. Faith, I mean such a Faith as will justify and save us at the last day, is not a bare assent to the Truth of these Doctrines, but such an Assent as is productive of all Holy Obedience, pious, charitable, sober, and righteous Conversation. And in a moral consideration, it is scarce possible for a man stedfastly to believe all these things, and to live in a direct contradiction to the true meaning and design of them. I am sure Men do not act so inconsistently in the ordinary affairs of life, who will venture to Sea in a Vessel, which he is fully perswaded is rotten and leaky? Who will drink a glass of Wine, which he firmly believes has a deadly poyson in it? Who will needlessly thrust himself into any Place or Company, where he hath a very just reason to fear he shall take a pestilential infection, or receive a mortal wound? Men do not act thus incon-

Tit. 1. 16.

Acts 15. 9.

Gal. 5. 6.

James 2. 22.

1 John 5. 4.

Eph. 6. 16.

siderately and foolishly in their present concerns, and they would be as cautious and careful about their future estate, if their Faith were as firm and steadfast concerning it. So that, I fear, there is much more Infidelity in the world, than many are willing to own there is : For let Men pretend to what Faith they please, yet if in their works they contradict their Profession, in Gods account they are destitute of Faith, and no better than Infidels, or at least he will treat them as such. That Faith alone, which is lively and operative, which purifies the heart and works by love, overcomes the World, quenches the fiery darts of the Devil, and is perfected by works, will intitle us to the Blessings of the New Covenant; which brings me to the Consideration of the last Condition of it, which is Obedience, and of this I shall treat under these two Heads.

I. As it implies a ceasing from Sin, &c.

II. As it implies doing well for the time to come.

I. As it implies a ceasing from Sin. And under this Head I do not see what Method I can follow better than that of our Church Catechism, which teaches us that we must renounce the Devil, and all his works, The Poms and Vanitie of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Let me therefore shew you,

1. What we understand by the Devil.
2. What by the Works of the Devil, and
3. What by renouncing both.

1. What we understand by the Devil.

Now

Now hereby in general we may understand the whole company of *evil Angels, who kept not their first Estate, but revolted from their allegiance to God, and are in everlasting chains under darkness to the judgment of the great Day.* Jud. 6.

But more especially we mean the Prince or Ring-leader of this Apostacy : For of such a one the Scripture speaks. We read of the *Prince of Devils, and the Prince of the power of the Air, the Spirit which worketh in the children of disobedience.* This Spirit emphatically, and peculiarly is that Evil Spirit, or Devil, the greatest enemy of Gods Glory, and Mans Happiness, whom we are obliged to renounce. Not but that all the evil Angels, being united in the same devilish Nature, and accursed designs (for *Satan is not divided against himself*) must be renounced : But he especially who seduced the rest, is that Evil One, whom we principally are bound to renounce. This being so I go on,

Matth. 9. 34.
Eph. 2. 2.

Matth. 12. 26.

1 John 3. 8.

2. To inquire what we mean by the Works of the Devil. Now there can be no doubt, but that Rebellion against God, or Sin in general, is the work of the Devil. But nevertheless there are some Sins, which carry more of his Stamp and Image upon them, than some others, and are in Scripture more particularly attributed to him ; for instance, it may very well be supposed, that Witchcraft and Idolatry, and the barbarous Sacrifices, and unnatural Pollutions, with which it was for the most part accompany'd, were the Devils own inventions to uphold his usurp'd authority in the World.

To

Matth. 4. 4.

John 8. 44.

1 Pet. 5. 8, 9.

Rev. 12. 10.

1 Tim. 36.

Eph. 4. 27.

To these may be added inticing to Sin. He is called *the Tempter*, whose incessant employment is to minister occasions, and fuel to corrupt inclinations and practices. Lying is another peculiar work of the Devil, he is styled a *Liar from the beginning and the Father of it*; Envy, Malice, and Murder, for he is the Envious one, and was a *murderer from the beginning*, and *go's about like a roaring Lion continually seeking whom he may devour*; Slander, Backbiting, and false Accusation, for he is *the Accuser of the Brethren*, and represented in the Revelation as accusing them before God, incessantly Day and Night. Pride, for being lifted up therewith, he fell from his Glory, and became a Devil; these and such like are the special and peculiar works of the Devil, partaking very deeply in his accursed nature and designs. I proceed to shew

3. What it is to renounce both, *viz.* the Devil and all his Works: Now this signifies to abhor, detest, and proclaim irreconcilable Enmity and open defiance against him, and all his accursed and evil Designs and Practices: Absolutely refusing his usurpt Authority, and disclaiming any communion or Fellowship with him, by complying with any of his suggestions, by tempting others to sin, or giving way to Pride, Lying, Envy, Malice, Cruelty, and such like odious and abominable Sins, which carry so much of the Devils Image and Stamp upon them.

Now by this you may search and examine your selves as to your temper and state in this point. Do you hate and renounce the Devil

vil

vil and all his Works. I know you will say you do. There is scarce so profligate a Wretch to be found, but will say he detests and defies him, and take it ill if any man seem to make any doubt concerning the truth of his Profession. But nevertheless if this same Man allow himself in Pride, Malice, and Envy, Censoriousness, Slander, and Lying, he may assure himself he resembles him very much in his nature and practice, and has a very intimate fellowship with him. The Evil Spirit has taken possession of him. He yields himself a Servant to do his works, and his Child, *servant*, and slave *he is, whom he thus obeys.* But as ceasing from Evil, imply's the Renunciation of the Devil and all his Works, so likewise it imply's

*Joh 8. 44.
Rom. 6. 16.*

2. To renounce the Poms and Vanity of this Wicked World. Now that this Wicked World is a very dangerous Enemy, and consequently to be renounced, appears from what the Apostle St. James hath taught us, *viz. That the Friendship of the World is Enmity with God*, and from what we learn from St. Paul, that *Jesus gave himself for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world*, which, if we love, *the love of the Father is not in us.* It is therefore diligently to be considered.

Jam. 4. 4.

Gal. 1. 4.

1 John 2. 15.

1. What we mean by this Wicked World.
2. What by the Pomp and Vanity of this Wicked World.
3. How far, or in what sense we renounce them.

1. What we mean by this Wicked World.
Now

Luke 16. 8.
John 17. 9.
Phil. 3. 19.

Now in a strict and proper sense by this Wicked World, we are to understand only Wicked Men, whom the Scripture calls *the Children of this World*, because they chiefly mind Worldly things. But in a larger sense we are to understand all the things of this World, which by reason of the great corruption of our Nature, or the ill use of them, accidentally are an urgent Temptation to, or occasion of Sin.

1 John 2. 16.

2. By the Pumps and Vanity of this Wicked World, we principally are to understand the *Pride of life*, High conceit of our selves, our own Acquisitions, Abilities, or Endowments, Affectation of Honour and high Place in the World, Ostentation of Authority and Greatness, Irregular, excessive desire of Riches, to minister to such vain Shews, Arrogance, and Ambition, immoderate love of pleasure, or undue fondness of any outward accommodation.

1 Cor. 5. 10;

3. Let us see in what sense we are bound to renounce them both. Now doubtless we must absolutely renounce them, so far as they are wicked. And therefore if by the World, we understand the Wicked Men that are in it, we renounce the Society and Friendship of all such Persons; by which, I do not mean, we must never come into the company of these Men, for then as the Apostle speaks, *we must go out of the world*, but we must not be needlessly familiar with them, seeking, choosing, and delighting in their Company; especially, we must dislike and disown their Pestilent Principles, and Pernicious Example

ple, absolutely refusing at all times to comply with their Temptations, or to make our selves like them by tempting others to any Sin.

If by the World, we mean the things of this World, it's Riches, Honour, and Pleasure, we are not absolutely obliged to renounce the desire and use of them, or some sort of delight in them. The Necessities of Nature, the Circumstances in which Providence may have placed us, require, and the Law of God permit this, in a due Subordination to Reason, and his Will. But we are obliged to refrain from an immoderate desire of these things, and excessive pleasure in them, especially from the unjust getting and possession of them, avoiding all Intemperance, Luxury, and Riot, Unthankfulness, and want of Charity to such as stand in need of it. We must so far renounce them, as to be ready in the preparation of our Hearts, to part with *lands, and possessions, houses, Brethren, Wife and Children*, all that is dear to us in this World, rather than sin against God, rather than forsake Christ, and his Religion. Luke 18. 29.

And here likewise let us all examine and search our Hearts and Ways; Are our Hearts swell'd with Pride, and our Tongues vain-glorious, and full of boasting? Are we greedy of Wealth, *making haste to be Rich*? Do we affect high Power and Greatness? Will nothing please and content us, but vain shews, unseemly bravery, and the magnificence of Great Men? Do we Choose, seek and delight in bad Company, and are we

we drawn into any sinful compliances with our lewd Companions? If so, we may assure our selves that our state is very dangerous: We cannot without a sincere and hearty Repentance lay any rightful claim to the great Blessings of the Gospel Covenant.

3. Ceasing to do Evil, implies a Renunciation of all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, so as not to follow or be led by them. Now by the Flesh, we may understand the corrupt Nature, which the Holy Scripture represents as the Root, Spring, and Fountain of all Sin.

By the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, we mean those inordinate desires, propensities, inclinations, passions, and affections, which proceed from this corrupt Nature, together with such impure and unclean Actions, as spring from such corrupt and carnal affections. Sayes the Apostle, *The works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like*, which words, are a clear and comprehensive Explication of what we mean by the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Now to renounce these can mean nothing less, than to detest and bewail this corruption of humane Nature, and to strive against it; to check the first motions of Lust before they break out into flame, to govern our affections, subdue our Passions, resist and overcome their unrulyness and disorder, to deny our selves every forbidden Pleasure, to refrain from every act

Gal. 5. 19.

act of sensuality, effeminacy, luxury, and riot, and to use moderation, even in our most lawful and innocent enjoyments.

Which being so, let us try and search our Hearts: Are we sensible of the Corruption of our Nature, our proneness to Evil, and our great backwardness to that which is Good? Do we lament it, and strive against it? Do we watch the first stirrings of Lust, and crush them before they gather strength? Are we sober and chaste in thought, speech, and behaviour? This is a real foundation for true joy and thankfulness. But if, on the contrary, we have no sense of the Corruption of our Nature, and sorrow for it, but foment and cherish it by consenting to its impure solicitations, and fulfilling its desires, we must repent unfeignedly of this our evil Temper, and Practice, or we shall never obtain the Promises of the Gospel. But this is not our whole Duty, 'tis not sufficient to cease from doing evil, but we must likewise *learn to do well*. Which brings me to consider the next Branch of Obedience, which consists,

Isa. 1. 16, 17.

3 Ep. Feb. 11.

II. In keeping the Commandments of God. And here I will do these two things. (1.) I will shew you the qualities or properties of Obedience. (2.) I will consider the Rule of Obedience. As to the first, *viz.* The quality or properties of Obedience you must remember.

1. That as *the law is spiritual*, so you must yeild a Spiritual, inward, and hearty Obedience to it, by which I mean these things:

Rom. 7. 14.

You

Rom. 7. 12.

- You must in your mind *consent to the Law*, like and approve it in your hearts, readily owning it to be, what in truth it is, a *holy, just, and good Law*, and must delight in it.

- You must obey it out of right Principles; your obedience must be founded in a just sense and acknowledgment of Gods Supream Authority over you, and your natural subjection to him, and be always attended with awful Reverence, and filial Affection, and then,

Cor. 10. 31.

- You must obey to right Ends and Purposes, not purely or principally to serve any secular, worldly, political end or advantage, but to do honour to God, and save your Souls. *Whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

2. Your Obedience must be Universal; by which I mean,

Rom. 12: 1.

You must obey with the whole Man, with all the powers and faculties of your Souls, and all the members and instruments of your Body: You must devote your selves intirely to him: Your Understanding, Will, and Affections, your Eyes, and Ears, and Tongue, and Hands, and Feet, must be employed in Gods Service. All were made by and for him, and all ought to be used to his Honour and Glory. Says the Apostle, *Glorify God in your Body and in your spirit which are Gods.* And then your Obedience must

John 15. 14.

- Extend to all Gods Commandments; then *are we his friends, if we do whatsoever he commands us.* And then shall we not be ashamed, if

Psal. 119. 6.

we have respect to all his commandments. Not simply, and absolutely all; for there are some Precepts which are peculiar to Ma-

gistrates,

gistrates, Ministers, Masters, Servants, and such like, and do not belong to every Person, but to such alone, who are under these respective Relations. But you must obey all that are suited to your capacity, agreeable, and proper to your state, condition, and circumstance of Life. All the general laws, or precepts of Christ, which concern all Christians alike, in order to their Salvation, must be obeyed by all, without distinction, exception or reserve. For whatsoever vain and inconsiderate Men may think, there is no duty enjoyn'd but what is really for Gods glory, and Mans good : And no Sin forbid but what is highly dishonourable to God, and hurtful to our selves and others. Besides every Precept is bound upon us, by the same Authority. *There is but one Law-giver, and that is God : He that said do not commit Adultery, said Also do not Kill : Yea,* which ought seriously to be considered by all such as content themselves, with a partial imperfect Obedience, we expose our selves to Gods Wrath, as surely by the breach of one Precept as by the violation of all. For as St. James speaks in the above-mentioned place, *He that shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all.* By which the Apostle does not mean that he who has broke one Law, hath broke all the rest, but that he who willfully breaks one Law (especially any such great Law as he is there speaking of) is as truly a Sinner in the sight of God, and as surely liable to punishment as he who breaks all. He who breaks all, must expect

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the severest Condemnation. And he who knowingly and willfully breaks one, must not expect a total exemption from punishment. His guilt indeed is less, and consequently his punishment will be the less. For the righteous God will punish Sinners in proportion to the Kind, Quality, Number, and several Aggravations of their Sins. Though we must acknowledge with shame and sorrow, that *in many things we offend all*, yet it is certainly true, the fewer our Offences are, the further we are from punishment, and the fewer our stripes will be; and the more our virtues are, the nearer we are to perfection, and to the Kingdom of God. As our Obedience must be thus extensive in respect of the matter of it, so likewise as to its duration, it must be

Jam. 3. 2.

Luke 12. 47.

Luke 1. 75.

Ex. 18. 24.

Heb. 10. 38.

3. Constant and persevering. We must *serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our Lives.* For if the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity — *All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned, in his trespass that he hath trespassed, in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* Says the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, *the just shall live by his Faith, but if he draw back my Soul shall have no pleasure in him.* By this, you may perceive the nature and quality of that Obedience which the Gospel requires. I proceed

2. To consider the Rule of Obedience. And this is the Moral Law, or those famous Precepts, commonly called the Decalogue or Ten Commandments. Which are a settled

and

and immutable Rule of Behaviour to Christians under the Gospel, not in Virtue of their first delivery to the Jews upon Mount Sinai, but by reason of their own Essential, Intrinsic Goodness, and our Saviours own Repetition, and Reinforcement of them. And as they are an unchangeable, so likewise they are a comprehensive Rule. The Law of God is a perfect and undefiled Law : His Commandment is exceeding broad. Which is not to be understood of the meer Letter of the Law : But we must take in the explanations of the succeeding Prophets : And we Christians must understand it according to our Saviours interpretation of it, in his excellent Sermon upon the Mount, in which he tells us, *he came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it* : Which renders it a very full, comprehensive, and perfect Rule ; for from his explication of it, we learn

Psal. 19. 7, 8.

Psal. 119. 96.

Matth. 5. 17.

1. Where any Duty is commanded, there the contrary Sin is forbidden, where any Sin is forbid, the contrary Duty or Vertue is commanded. So that every Precept, hath an Affirmative, and Negative part, from whence arises that known Distinction of Sins, that they are either Sins of Omission, or Sins of Commission. The meaning of this Rule will be plain by an instance or two. For Example, When we are forbid to have any other God, it is intended, and required, that we should own and acknowledge the true God. When we are forbid to Kill, 'tis implied that we ought to preserve Life, by all lawful and honest means, to our power.

*vid. Down:
Analys.*

Col. 3. 5.
Matth. 5. 28.

2. When any Duty is enjoyned, or any Sin forbid, all Vertues of the same kind, are enjoyned, and all the Sins of the same kind, are likewise forbidden, *i. e.* whatsoever by just Consequence flows from, or is fairly reducible to such a general Head, is and ought to be comprehended under it. Take for Example the Seventh Commandment, the thing especially forbid is Adultery, or the defiling our Neighbours Wife : But doubtless Fornication, Lasciviousness, Uncleaness, impure Thoughts, filthy Speeches, indecent Gestures, wanton Looks, and unchast Desires, are included under the general Prohibition.

3. Where any Duty is enjoyn'd, or any Sin is forbidden, all the Causes, Means, Occasions, Provocations, Allurements, and Furtherances, to do the one, and avoid the other, are likewise enjoyn'd or forbid. For Example, Perjury is the Sin directly forbidden in the Third Commandment : But it is very reasonably inferred, that the profane, rash, inconsiderate use of Oaths, in ordinary Conversation, is in like manner forbidden, as coming of Evil, and being a very great occasion of Perjury, or false-Swearing. As the public Worship of God, at set and solemn Times, is commanded in the Fourth Precept, so it is likewise enjoyn'd under it, that we should not wholly immerse our selves in worldly Affairs, which will hinder our attendance upon it, at such times.

4. Where any thing is enjoyn'd or forbid, we should look upon our selves, in our respective

pective places, in some degree at least, obliged to promote the one, and hinder the other, in other Men as well as our selves. We are commanded to acknowledge and Worship the true God, and this we do, and we do very Well : But yet this is not the whole of our Duty ; we offend against the Law, if we do not endeavour to perswade others, especially such as are under our Authority, and committed to our care, to the like acknowledgment and Worship.

5. Lastly, As was before observed, we must always remember that the Law is Spiritual, extending not only to outward actions, but likewise to the very Heart, the Thoughts, Inclinations, Passions, and Affections of Men, whereby they are bound, not only to *cleanse their hands*, but to *purifie their hearts*, and *glorifie God both in Soul and Body*, which are *James 4. 8.*
1 Cor. 6. 20

These things being premised, I will only add two remarks, and then proceed to the consideration of the Commandments themselves, and

1. It is worthy our observation that the Precepts which refer more immediately to God, are first in order ; from whence we learn, that the Glory and Honour of God is our Principal concern, and the cheif ground, reason, or spring of all Duty.

2. Whereas the Precepts of the Law are Affirmative and Negative, commanding some Duty or forbidding some Sin, you are to take notice that the Negative Precepts are of perpetual and Universal Obligation. For

Example, Thou shalt have no other Gods but me, is a Negative Precept, and therefore Universally binding. There can be no sufficient Reason, no such Conjunction of Circumstances, as can justifie or excuse Polytheisme, or the Worship of more Gods than one; and the like may be said of Perjury, bearing false-Witness, &c.

As for the Affirmative Precepts, tho' they are always binding or in force, yet-as to the exercise of particular Acts, they are not so, they do not oblige at all times. For instance, tho' the Habitual temper of our Minds, should be always towards God, yet a Man is not at all times oblig'd to exercise himself in acts of devout Meditation, Prayer, and Praise, but only to seek, and embrace all proper Seasons, and Occasions of them, especially such as are Public and Solemn. And so though a Man, who is in a capacity to give, be bound at all times to be Charitably affected towards his needy Brethren, yet he is not obliged to be always actually giving. 'Tis sufficient, if he seek out fit Objects for his Charity, and give upon all seasonable and fit Occasions, according to his Power. And now I go on to the Commandments themselves, and the first thing to be considered is the Preface, to enforce the Observation of them. Now the Preface to the Ten Commandments is in these Words.

God spake all these Words, saying, **I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage.**

Exod. 20. 1.

IN which words God Almighty the great Law-giver asserts his own authority to command, or give a Law to his People, and shews the ground of their Obligation to hear and obey him. He declares that he is *Jehovah*, that infinitely glorious and incomprehensible Being, who subsists of himself, and gave being to every thing else that is. Whereby he hath the most just and absolute Right to their Persons and Service. He owns himself their God by special and peculiar Covenant, *Having chosen them to be a special people to himself above all other people upon the Face of the Earth.* He puts them in mind of his goodness towards them, shewing that he is their great Benefactor, and merciful Redeemer, having lately delivered them from the Tyranny of *Pharoah*, and the Bondage of *Egypt*, in a marvellous and astonishing manner; so that not only the Super-eminent Perfections of his Nature, but also the signal Demonstrations of his Mercy and Goodness towards them, obliged them to attend to, consider, and obey all his Commands.

Deut. 7. 6.

But is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Is he not our Almighty Creator and Benefactor? Is he not our

Rom. 3. 29.

Gal. 3. 14.

1 Pet. 2. 9.

God by special Covenant? Is not the blessing of Abraham come upon us through Faith in Christ Jesus? Are not we true Israelites? A chosen generation, a Royal Priesthood, a peculiar People? Is he not our Redeemer and Saviour? Having delivered us from a greater Bondage than that of Egypt, the Tyranny of Satan, the Slavery of Sin, the Power of Death, the Torments of Hell, and made us Heirs of a much better Country than Caanan, Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven? All this we most gratefully acknowledge he hath done for us Christians, and consequently own our Obligation to hear and obey him, to be as great, yea, much greater, than that which the Jews lay under. Speak therefore, O Lord, for thy Servants will hear and obey. We thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast spoken to us, and rejoyce in the Declaration of thy Will, for thou hast said to us, as well as to the Jews.

1 Sam. 3. 9.

I. Com.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

Jer. 10. 10.

Ex. 34. 14.

Math. 4. 10.

Col. 2. 16.

Which is a just, reasonable and holy Law. For herein we are expressly forbid, either to deny the God of Israel, the true and living God, or to Worship any other God in Copartnership together with him. Now though none of us do directly Worship the Sun, Moon, and Stars, or any of the false Deities of the Heathen World, yet if together with this one true God, we Worship Angels, and Saints,

saints, if we think unworthily of him, comparing any thing with him, or preferring any thing before him, If we are greedy of filthy lucre, or love pleasures more than we love him, or serve our own bellies, or lean to our own understanding, or trust in men, chariots or horses, or if we ascribe the Gifts of Gods Bounty to our own, or others Abilities, saying my own, or their Hand and power have wrought all this for us, or if professing to know God, we in works deny him, we truly offend against the design and meaning of this Commandment. In Scripture-sense, and in Gods Account, we make *Mammon*, our Bellies, our own, or their right Arm our God.

Isa. 63. 16.
Rom. 1. 25.
Col. 3. 5.
2 Tim. 3. 4.
Phil. 3. 19.

Dan. 4. 30.
Tit. 1. 16.

And as these things are forbid, so likewise it is directly commanded, that as God hath chosen us for his People, so we should choose him, Him exclusively of all others, for our God. That we should conceive rightly of him, having due apprehensions of the incomprehensibly glorious Perfections of his Nature, *Sanctifying him in our hearts*, and rendering all suitable Acts of Worship to him, of which these which follow are the principal. viz.

Deut. 26. 17. 18
Matth. 4. 10.

1 Pet. 3. 15.

That we should believe him to be the first Cause and ultimate end of all things, that we absolutely depend upon him, and submit ourselves to him, referring all our Actions, Natural, Moral, and Religious, whether publick or private, to his Honour and Glory.

Rom. 11. 36.

That we should fear him, the great, mighty, and terrible God, who is a consuming Fire, excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty

Deut. 7. 21.
Heb. 12. 29.

of

Neh. 9. 32.
Job 37. 23.
Ecc. 12. 14.

of justice; who is the Witness, and will one Day be the Judge of our Hearts and Behaviour.

1 Pet. 5. 7.
Psal. 46. 1.
Isa. 26. 4.
Psal. 89. 33.

That we should cast all our care and Burden upon him, and hope and trust in him for ever; who is our Refuge and help, the Rock of ages, and hath everlasting strength, and will not suffer his truth and faithfulness to fail.

Psal. 145. 18.

1 Tim. 1. 2:

James 1. 17.

That we should offer the Sacrifice of Prayer and Praise to him, who is nigh unto them that call upon him, who call upon him in sincerity and truth, who is the God of all grace mercy and peace, the giver of every good and perfect gift, the foundation of all our present enjoyments, and future hope.

Rom. 12. 1,

Matth. 22. 37.

John 8. 29.

Psal. 145. 21.

Phil. 1. 23.

That we should present our selves, Soul, Body, and Spirit, a living, holy, and acceptable Sacrifice, and love him with all our Soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength, choosing what he chooseth, hating what he hates, studying to please him more than all the World besides, delighting to draw near to him, speaking of his Praise, and longing for the everlasting Enjoyment of him. All these things doubtless, are implied in, having God for our God; and if these be our Thoughts, Resolution, and Practice, we do in some good measure and degree, come up to the intention and design of this first and great Commandment of the Law. I proceed to the next, which God himself delivered in these Words.

Thou

Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the water under the Earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, For I, the Lord, thy God, am a Jealous God, and visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me, and shew Mercy unto thousands, in them that love me, and keep my Commandments. II. Com.

In which Precept we are to consider,

I. The thing it self which is forbidden.

II. The Reasons for which it is forbid.

III. The Penalty threatned to the Transgression of it, together with the Promise annex't to those who keep it.

I. The thing it self which is forbidden.

Now whereas the first Commandment prohibited the Belief, acknowledgement, and Worship of any other God, besides the *one true and living God*. The second forbids even the Worship of the true God himself, by any corporeal Image, or visible representation of him, together with the very making the Image, or likeness of any thing, in Heaven, or Earth, or the Waters under the Earth; *i. e.* the Image of the Celestial Bodies, *Dent. 4. 16.* Birds,

Birds, Men, Beasts, or Fishes, according to the custom of the Heathen World, with an intention to set up any such Image, whether Carved, or Painted, in the place of Divine Worship; in order to the performance of any outward action, or using any gesture, in signification of any religious Honour or Reverence due to it, for the sake of that Being who is represented by it; such as Offering Sacrifice, burning Incense, or Vowing to it, Swearing by it, or Kneeling, and Prostrating our selves before it. Now the Reasons of this Prohibition are these.

1. God is a Jealous God, concern'd to assert his Right, and infinitely tender of his Honour and Glory, and *will not give his praise to graven Images.* Besides,

Isa. 42. 8.

2. No Similitude of God was ever seen; and by reason of the incomprehensible, and infinite Perfections of his Nature, it is absolutely impossible to make any Similitude or Representation of him. Say's God himself, *take good heed to your selves, for ye saw no manner of similitude in the day which the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, lest you corrupt your selves, and make you a graven Image.* And by his Prophet he asks the Question, saying, *To whom will ye liken God! or what likeness will ye compare to him?* Every Corporeal Representation of God, is an affront to his Majesty, a reproach to his Nature and Perfections, leads Men to mean and unworthy Notions of him, is a debasement of our selves, making us stoop to things below us, to the work of our own Hands. *For we are the Offspring*

Deut. 4. 15.

Ex. 17. 29.

spring

spring of God, and therefore ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto Gold, or Silver, or Stone graven by art or mans device. This kind of Worship therefore being so very criminal, and highly provoking, we are the less to wonder at the Penalty threatned to it, which indeed is very severe : For which is next to be considered,

2. God threatens to punish such as Worship him, by any Corporeal Representations, not only in their own Persons, but also in their Posterity, to the third and fourth Generation : For whatever the Patrons of this Idolatrous Worship may pretend, or think either of their Worship or themselves, God himself, who is the best Interpreter of his own Law, esteems their Worship an Abomination, and looks upon themselves as his greatest Enemies, styling them *Haters* of him.

Now though none of us do proceed to this degree of Impiety, as to *change the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible man*, yet if we plead for, or connive at those who do, seeking out Colours to palliate and lessen their guilt ; If we neglect to reprove them in due season, and place ; if we are present at their Worship, without expressing, or discovering some dislike to it ; if we do not pray for, and endeavour their amendment, we are in a sort partakers of their Sin, and encourage and harden them in it. Yea, if we Worship God in an unseemly, irreverent manner, if we superstitiously affect childish, useless, unprofitable usages in his Service, such as
are

Rom. 1. 23.

2 Ep. Joh. 11.

1 Cor. 8. 10.

John 4. 24.

are in no way subservient to the general Rule of Edification ; yea though otherwise innocent, yet if we excessively multiply them, so as to hinder the service of the Heart, we in some sort, and in some degree, offend against the true meaning of this Commandment, which

Psal. 29. 2.

John 4. 24.

Psal. 95. 6.

In its Affirmative part, teaches us to Worship God in such a manner as is suitable to the Perfections of his Nature, and agreeable to the Revelation of his Will. Since he is a spiritual and invisible Essence, we are bound to *worship him in Spirit and in truth*; submitting our understandings, wills, and affections to him: and must express this submission of our Hearts, by the generally approved, external Signs of it, prostrating our Bodies, bowing our Knees, lifting up our Hands, and Eyes to him. For though the Christian Worship be inward and Spiritual, yet it does not exclude, but plainly requires, the Worship of the Body: We must *glorify God both in Body and Soul which are his*. We must hear and receive his Word with attention, and reverence; Confess our Sins with Shame, and Sorrow; Pray with Humility and Fervency; Praise with Joy and Gladness; and as far as we can, shew by some outward sensible Signs, that these are the inward affections, and temper of our Hearts; and in so doing we Worship him, not according to the imaginations of our own vain and corrupt Hearts, but according to his own Will and Appointment, with a true and holy Worship.

And they who do Worship him, with such

such a Pure, Spiritual, Decent, Humble, and Holy Worship, in his Account do truly Love him : They are his Friends, and have a promise of his Favour and Kindness, not only to themselves, but to their Posterity likewise, *to a Thousand, i. e. to many Generations.*

O Blessed God, how do we admire, adore, and praise thy infinite Goodness : Thou hast no pleasure in Acts of Severity, but to shew Mercy is thy Delight. What a vast disproportion is there, between the effects of thy Justice, and Goodness ! Thou Punishest but to three or four, but thou shewest Mercy and Favour to a multitude of Generations !

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in Vain, for the Lord will not hold him Guiltless, that taketh his Name in Vain.

III. Com.

In which Precept we must consider the matter of it, and its Sanction, or the Penalty threatned to the Transgressors of it. Now by the Name of God, we understand God himself, his Attributes, and Perfections, and whatsoever is his. Every thing upon which his Name is called, or which is Appropriate, and Holy to him. By taking his Name in Vain, we understand the Prophane, and Irreverent use of it, or any thing which belongs to him. But doubtless the Sin principally forbidden is Perjury, or Swearing falsely

falsely by the Name of God, which grievous Sin is committed,

Lev. 5. 4. 5.
Lev. 19. 12.

1. When Men call God to witness, that such a thing is true, which they either certainly know to be false, or at least have reason to doubt, whether it be true or no.

Lev. 5. 4. 5. 7

2. When they appeal to him, as a Witness of their Resolution to perform any thing, which they resolve never to perform, at least never endeavour so to do; but on the contrary use many sly Tricks, and subtle Distinctions, doubtful Terms, and mental Equivocations, to evade, and get lose from the obligation of their Oath. Which is a horribly aggravated Sin, and may very reasonably be supposed to be chiefly aimed at in the Law.

Math. 5. 34.

1 Tim. 6. 1.

2 Kings 19. 22.

Rom. 12. 14.

Jam. 3. 10.

Lev. 21. 6.

22. 2.

1 Thess. 4. 8.

Nevertheless by parity of Reason, yea by our Saviours Authority, we may infer, that all careless, inconsiderate, impertinent and prophane use of Gods Name, All Oaths by Idols, or any Creature, whether in Heaven or Earth, All rash and wicked Vows, All unadvised, passionate, and customary Swearing in ordinary Conversation, Irreverent and Blasphemous Speeches, concerning Gods Works, or Providence, direful Cursings, and horrid Imprecations upon our selves or others, together with unnecessary repeated Asseverations. All abuse or contempt of any thing upon which the Name of God is called, his Word, his Sacraments, his Ministers, and the Sacrilegious defrauding them of their Right; his Time, his Worship, and Places set apart for it, are all likewise forbidden.

For

For all these are very great Sins and Provocations, and whosoever are guilty of them should seriously, and frequently consider,

2. The Sanction of this Law, or the threatening denounced against the Breakers of it. *The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in Vain*; i. e. God himself will be his own Avenger, and inflict very severe Punishments upon such presumptuous Sinners. However others may escape, it shall certainly go very ill with these.

*Zech. 9. 3. 4.
Lev. 24. 15,
16.*

But though according to our bounden Duty, we should heedfully keep our selves from all these Sins, yet we have not fulfilled the Law in its whole latitude, for it hath a positive part, and requires,

That we believe, consider, and confess, that the Name of God is a great, terrible, and, glorious, an excellent, holy, and reverend Name, and that we never make mention of it, but with an actual, or at least habitual esteem, veneration, and honour. That we fear an Oath, and (when just Authority, and a reasonable occasion require, that we confirm the Truth, and put an end to Strife, by a solemn Oath) we swear in Oath, judgment, and righteousness, that when we vow unto the Lord, our Vow be advised, and voluntary, of a thing possible and lawful to be done, and that we heedfully perform our Vow, and that we also fulfil our just Promises to our Neighbour, if he exact them of us, though we lose thereby. That we use all Gods Institutions, and every thing related to him, with a suitable peculiar respect, carefully distinguishing between Sacred and Profane, Holy

*Psal. 99. 3.
111. 9.
Deut. 28. 58.*

*Heb. 6. 16.
Jer. 4. 2.*

Ecl. 5. 4.

Psal. 15. 3.

1 Cor. II. 22.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Tit. 2. 14.

ly and Common ; making a difference between the Holy Scriptures, and the best Composures, and Inventions of Men ; the Sacramental Elements, and Common Water, Bread, and Wine : The Day of the Lord, and the Days in which we are permitted to do our own Work : The House of God, and our own Habitations ; His peculiar Ambassadors and Ministers : Especially since his Name is called upon us, since he hath chosen us to be a people peculiar to himself ; we are infinitely obliged to glorifie his Name by a pious, Sober, Righteous, and blameless Conversation. And if we do thus, we may assure our selves of his Favour and Blessing, for he who hath threatned a Penalty to the disobedient, virtually and in effect, promises a Reward to such as keep this Commandment.

IV. Com.

Remember that thou keep Holy the Sabbath Day, six Days shalt thou labour, and do all, that thou hast to do, but the seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : In it thou shalt do no manner of Work, Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, nor thy Man Servant, nor thy Maid Servant, nor thy Cattel, nor the Stranger that is within thy Gates. For in six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh Day, wherefore the

Lord

Lord blessed the seventh Day, and hallowed it.

The Law of Nature or Reason teaches us, that we ought publickly to Adore and Worship the great Creator of the World, and Author of our being; and consequently that we set apart a reasonable, and competent Time for such Worship. But then it do's not equally ascertain that due proportion or determinate measure of time, which is necessary or convenient. It pleased therefore the Great and Wise Creator himself, expressly to declare by a Law, what quantity of time he required for publick Worship. And this he hath done in the Fourth Commandment. Which though it do not oblige us Christians in all respects, as it did the Jews, yet as to the Substance of it, it is still in force, and shews us very much of our Duty. For

1. If any one be contentious, and will not allow that by the meer Letter of the Law, we are absolutely obliged to set apart one Day in seven, for the Solemn Worship of God, yet it is allow'd on all Hands, that some solemn Time must be set apart to this purpose: And with submission, I think it cannot reasonably be denied, but that in this Precept there is a foundation of Equity, upon which to ground the separation of the same determinate (or it may be greater) portion of time for the same Religious end, and purpose: For Gods Example is a pattern to us Christians, as well as to the Jews, we are as much concerned to keep up the Memory of the Crea-

tion of the World in six Days, and Gods resting upon the seventh as they were : We are equally obliged to make it appear that we are the Worshippers of the same Almighty Creator : And our Obligations to him are as great, yea much greater than theirs ; and therefore we cannot without shameful ingratitude, dedicate less time, to his publick Honour and Worship.

3. And blessed be God, we Christians are not wanting in this respect. We have consecrated an equal portion of time for ~~the~~ publick Religious worship. It must be confest there is a change of the particular day ; but not without a great and weighty reason. Our Saviour, (if we may compare things of this nature) having finished a greater, and more stupendious Work than that of the Creation, and wrought a much greater Deliverance, and a far more plenteous Redemption than that of *Egypt*, by suffering in our Nature upon the Cross, and having lain in the Grave for a time, rose again the third day from his Crucifixion, whereby he was *declared to be the Son of God*, and did demonstrate the Power he had with his Father, and assure us of the efficacy of his performances. It seemed good therefore to the Apostles from the beginning (and doubtless in all the great affairs of the Church they were under the direction and conduct of the Holy Ghost) to separate this day upon which our Saviour rose, to be a solemn Day for publick Religious worship, in remembrance of our Saviours Resurrection, and in honour of him it is called

John 20. 19, 26.
Rev. 1. 10.

called the *Lords day*, and hath been religiously observed ever since in all Ages of the Church : So that the main substance of the Fourth Commandment is observed, both as to the separation of some set time for publick Worship, as also in respect of the very same determinate measure or quantity of time : And where to begin our Account, being but a circumstance, so great an occasion as our Saviours Resurrection, and so great an Authority, as that of the Apostles, may very well satisfy our Consciences, and determine our practice in this point.

Acts 20. 7.
1 Cor. 16. 2.

2. Having set apart a determinate convenient portion of time for the publick Worship of God, we must be careful that at all such times we exercise our selves in Acts of Piety and Devotion, considering the great and marvellous Works of Creation and Providence, especially the wonderful and gracious Work of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, and his Resurrection from the Grave upon the third day, according to his promise, admiring and praising the infinite wisdom, power, love, and goodness which is manifested in them. And then from this Commandment we are likewise taught,

3. That it is our Duty, as much as in us lies, to bring all such as are under our more immediate care and inspection, our Children and Servants, especially, to a due and careful Observation of the like time.

Yea the more Ritual, and circumstantial parts of the Precept are very useful and instructive to us. For

F 3

Whereas

Heb. 4. 10.

Whereas God Almighty enjoyed a strict cessation from all bodily labour both as to Man and Beast, this teaches us to disentangle our selves, as much as may be, from worldly affairs, that we may have the more leisure to serve God, and improve our Souls, especially it shews us that we must *cease from our own works*, the works of Sin, and dispose and prepare our selves for that everlasting rest which *remains for the People of God*, of which this Corporal Rest was a Type and shadow.

Deut. 5. 15.

Yea, whereas God Almighty required this strict Rest from the Jews in remembrance of their Redemption, from the intollerable slavery and burdens of *Egypt*, This shews us that it is our duty in a publick and solemn manner, gratefully to commemorate National Deliverances, vouchsafed either to our selves, or to our Forefathers.

Whereas the same strict Rest was enjoined to their Servants; from hence we learn, our obligation to value the Soul of the meanest person in the World, and to be concerned for his Salvation; as also to be careful of his bodily Estate, indulgent and tender towards him.

Prov. 12. 10.

And whereas the like strict Rest was enjoined in respect of the very Cattel, this plainly insinuates that we should be *merciful* to our very *Beasts*, at least never exercise any Acts of Cruelty towards them.

In one word, If we spend that Seventh Day, which in conformity to Apostolical, Ancient, and General practice of the Church,

we

we have appropriated and devoted to the publick Worship of God (and other occasional Holy Days) as our Church enjoyns in her thirteenth Canon ; ' In hearing the Word ' of God read and taught, in private and ' publick Prayers, in acknowledging our Offences to God, and amendment of the same, ' in reconciling our selves Charitably to our ' Neighbours where displeasure hath been, ' in oftentimes receiving the Communion of ' the Body and Blood of Christ, in visiting ' of the Poor and Sick, using all Godly and sober Conversation, we answer the principal end and meaning of this Commandment. But if either we our selves, engage our selves, so much in worldly Affairs, and Recreations, or permit others, over whom we have power, so to do, as to hinder us from the due and regular performance of these, and such like duties upon it, we are Breakers of this Commandment, and injurious both to God, and our own Souls.

This is a short and plain account of the first Table of the Law, which chiefly respects the Honour and Worship of God. I proceed to the second Table, whose Precepts have a more immediate Relation to our Neighbour, and shew what duties are owing to him. And the first Precept of this Table is delivered in these Words.

Honour thy Father and thy Mother,
that thy Days may be long in the
Land

V. Com.

Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee,

The general design of which Precept is, to oblige all Inferiours to observe and reverence their Superiours, and to obey them as far as they are subject to them, in all honest and lawful things in the Lord; *i. e.* out of regard to his Authority, who hath commanded them so to do. Not but that by just consequence and Analogy, there are Duties incumbent upon Superiours to their Inferiours, and what both are, in the most common Relations, I will now consider, and lay before you.

Now Men may be consider'd as the Members of a Family, Church, or Commonwealth,

Considered as Members of a Family, we observe the Relation of Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, Master and Servant, and their respective mutual Duties are as follows.

The Duties of Husband and Wife are Common or special,

The Duties which they owe in common to each other are mutual Cohabitation, Love, Assistance, and Conjugal Fidelity. *The Husband must dwell with his Wife, and the Wife must not forsake her Husband: They must love each other without dissimulation, help each other with diligence and chearfulness, and keep the Bed undefiled, as becomes the honourable state of Marriage.*

1 Pet. 3. 7.

1 Cor. 7. 13.

Hel. 13. 4.

The more special and peculiar Duties of the Husband towards his Wife are, to defend

send her from Wrong, to afford her the necessities and conveniences of Life, according to his ability, to avoid bitterness in his words, and moroseness in his Behaviour, *Col. 3. 19.* bearing with her infirmities, to instruct her, *1 Pet. 3. 7.* if she need instruction, and to be easie, mild, and gentle, kind and obliging in his conversation with her, and the exercise of his authority over her, considering her as a part of his own Body, even as one *Flesh with himself. Eph. 5. 28.*

The more special Duties of the Wife towards the Husband are Reverence, Subjection, and Obedience to him as to her Head, together with a discreet and careful management of his domestical Affairs, and all other things committed to her care, according to her skill and power, without *usurping authority over him. Col. 3. 18.* And to render her self amiable and useful, must avoid idleness, and tattling, and impertinent wandring from house to house, together with an undue affectation of rich and gaudy Attire, *plaiting of the bair, wearing of Gold, and putting on of apparel; Eph. 5. 24, 33.* and study to cloth and adorn her self, with humility, modesty, and the ornament of *a meek and quiet Spirit, which are of great price in the sight of God, and approved of Men; 1 Tim. 3. 11.* and must testifie her inward reverence, by respectful words and behaviour, imitating *Sarah who obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord; 1 Tim. 5. 13.* in acknowledgment of his Superiority over her. *1 Pet. 3. 6.*

The next Relation is that of Parents and Children.

Now

- Now the principal Duties of Parents towards their Children are these. To be naturally affected towards them, carefully preserving them as the fruit of their own Loins: To dedicate them early by Baptism, to the Faith and Obedience of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To teach them to *remember their Creator in the days of their youth, training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, going before them in a pious, prudent, and sober Conversation, behaving themselves as the Psalmist resolved, *in a perfect way, walking in their own house with a perfect heart*. It is their Duty to govern them without Austerity, to rebuke them in season, and with true love, to correct them with moderation and tenderness, not *provoking them needlessly to wrath* or discontent. To provide for their future comfortable Subsistence, as well by laying up something in store for them, as by bringing them up in some suitable, honest employment or calling: And in convenient time to take care for their Marriage, if they desire or need it, with some religious, vertuous, and prudent Person, not ceasing to pray for, and endeavour after their present and future prosperity and happiness, both in this World, and the next.
- And as Parents must be thus affected towards their Children, so Children are obliged in an extraordinary and special manner to honour their Parents, Father and Mother, both (as jointly concurring to their production) without distinction or difference, esteeming them highly in their hearts, and manifesting
- Rom. 1. 31.*
2 Tim. 3. 3.
Matth. 28. 19.
Eccles. 12. 1.
Eph. 6. 4.
Psal. 101. 2.
Eph. 5. 4.
2 Cor. 12. 14.
Gen. 24. 3.
27. 45.
1 Cor. 7. 36.
Lev. 19. 34.

manifesting this inward esteem, by respectful words and dutiful behaviour : They must *hearken to the instruction of their Father, and not forget the Law of their Mother* : Obey all their lawful commands, in the Lord, and submit to their Chastisements without impatience, murmuring, and discontent : Be careful of their outward State, and never *Rob them, saying it is no transgression.* They must often think, and speak of their tenderness, care, and love, and express a very grateful sense of it; and if they fall into poverty must readily help and sustain them, as far as they are able, for *this is good and acceptable before God.* And when they are arrived at riper years, and desirous of Marriage, since they are their Parents Propriety, and a special Branch of it, must not presume to defraud them of their Right, by entring in that state, without their advice and consent, but be contented to be directed and guided by them, according to the Laudable custom of pious Men in ancient Times, and the Rules of most well ordered Common-wealths. I say they must not presume to do this, unless the case be very extraordinary, of which they themselves are not so proper judges : And after advice with other Relations, Friends, or prudent, and unprejudic'd Persons, and after the repeated use of their own, and Friends endeavours, to get their consent to it.

Now that this Precept of honouring our Parents, is a Precept of special and extraordinary concernment, appears from these two things.

1. From

Prov. 1. 8:

Eph. 6. 1.

Heb. 12. 7, 9.

Prov. 28. 24.

1 Tim. 5. 4.

Gen. 21. 21.

Judg. 14. 2.

From the Place it hath in the Decalogue, immediately following those which relate to Gods Honour and Worship, as if next to the Divine Majesty, our Parents were to be honoured and obey'd. And then

2. From the Promise annexed to it ; which is long Life in a comfortable enjoyment of the Gifts of Gods Bounty, in our respective Habitations.

But on the contrary, it is abundantly evident from Scripture, that stubborn and disobedient Children, such especially as deride and Curse their Parents, have just reason to fear that their Days should be cut off, either immediately by the Hand of Heaven, or by the Hand of the Civil Power. What else can be the meaning of these and such like passages ?
Curst be he that setteth light by his Father and Mother. And the Eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it. Can any thing else be understood by them, than that such have just reason to expect an untimely and infamous end ?

The next Domestick or Family Relation is that of Masters and Servants.

Now the Duties of Masters towards their Servants are such as these. They must consider them as their fellow Creatures, made in the Image of God, and as their Brethren in Christ Jesus, and consequently are bound to take care of their Souls. Never allowing them in any known Sin : Never winking at, favouring, approving, or rewarding them
 for

Dent. 27. 16.

Prov. 30. 17.

Philem. 16.

Josh. 24. 15.

for any fraud or cheat they may be guilty of : For some Servants hope to ingratiate themselves with their Masters, by cheating others for their Profit. They must instruct them in what they are ignorant of, and reprove them where they are blame-worthy, *Gen. 18. 19* and allow them sufficient time for the adorning and improvement of their Souls. Especially must bring them to the publick worship upon the Lords Day, (and upon other Holy Days, and Days of Prayer, if it may conveniently be done, as our Church piously wishes in her fifteenth Canon.) After this care of their Servants Souls, it is their duty likewise to provide for their sustenance and bodily health, by giving them convenient Food in due season : To direct them in the works of their calling, and commend, and encourage them in the prosecution and management of them : And if they have shewn extraordinary diligence, to acknowledge and reward it : And not as the manner of some is, hinder them of places of greater advantage, by feeding them up with empty expectations, of what they will do for them, purely to make a gain of them, and then having served their own ends upon them, and being sensible of their obligation to reward their extraordinary diligence and fidelity, which yet they are unwilling to do, take occasion to pick some quarrel with them, and hereupon pretending they have forfeited all their right to their favour and kindness, unconscionably, and basely thrust them out of their Family and Service. They must exercise

Col. 4. 1.
Eph. 6. 9.

Lev. 19. 13.

Deut. 15. 13.

ercise their Authority over them, with moderation, gentleness, and love, requiring nothing unlawful, impossible, extreamly vexatious, or disproportionable to their strength and skill. Abstaining from much severity, *forbearing causeless and excessive threatenings, knowing that they have a Master in Heaven with whom is no respect of persons.* And then they are oblig'd to *give them what is just and equal*, their true and full Wages in due season, without any abatement, or unnecessary delays, with a willing and chearful mind. And if they have served them long with diligence and faithfulness, and upon a reasonable cause, think fit to leave their service, it becomes them, if they have wherewithal to do it, *not to suffer them to go away empty.* And whatsoever Masters are negligent in these respects, let them know and consider that they have a Master in Heaven, who will one Day call them to a strict Account for such neglect.

The Duties of Servants towards their Masters are these.

Col. 4. 1.
1 Tim. 6. 1.
Eph. 6. 5.
Tit. 2. 9.

Servants must esteem their Masters in their Hearts, and shew due reverence towards them in their outward carriage and behaviour, whether they be rich or poor, in regard to Gods institution and command, *counting them worthy of all honour.* They must fear their displeasure, and strive and study to please them, in all lawful things, use diligence in their business, and be careful of their profit, and faithful in all things; *not purloining, i. e. coufening, stealing or filching* ought

ought from them, (neither yet may they cheat others for them) but *shewing all good fidelity*, they are obliged to obey all their commands, and submit to their reproof, without *answering again*, by any murmuring and contemptuous Speeches. They should not pry into their secrets, much less betray them: Neither should they delight in, or publish their Infirmities. A thing very much forgot by Servants, especially such as remove often from Family to Family. Caution, and reservedness in these cases are very becoming, and necessary to peace and quietness among Neighbours. Their service must not be a meer *eye service, as men pleasers only*, but they must *serve in singleness of heart, as unto Christ*, considering that in the performance of their duty towards their Earthly, they serve him their Heavenly Master, and may expect, and shall receive a reward from him. And which is a high instance of Duty, they must know and remember that this subjection, fidelity, and obedience, is due not only to such Masters as are *good and gentle*, but to such as are *froward, i. e. morose, and rigorous, severe and injurious*, remembering that *this is thank worthy towards God, if a man for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.*

1 Pet. 2. 18.

And to encourage Servants to all this, they should consider that by such a faithful Conscientious discharge of their Duty, they do what in them lies *adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour*, and hinder his name and doctrine from being blasphemed in the World. What can be a greater

Tis. 2. 10.

1 Tim. 6. 1.

greater comfort to a poor Servant (or indeed to any one else) than to consider that he is a support, and an ornament to his Religion! Hitherto of Mens Duties in their Family Relation.

2. In the next place, Men may be considered as Members of a Church, and then they are Ministers, and People, and there are many duties peculiar to both. I know very well there are some Men who will hardly consider Ministers as subject to the like passions that other Men are, but expect an almost Angelical perfection from them: And others fancy that Religion is so much their business that they themselves are little concern'd in it, or that their Ministers Virtues, should in a sort atone for their own immorality and prophaness: But I know no Duty (abstracting from the special Duties of their Function) but what other Christians are bound to practice as well as they; for are they to be sober, pious, grave, temperate, peaceable, Heavenly minded, and resign'd to the will of God? And are not lay-Christians obliged to be so too? Are they to be Examples of the Flock? And is not the Flock bound to follow their Example? And as to the special Duties of their Function, they are represented with that force and advantage in our Office of Ordination (which also is in the hands of the People to read it if they please) and they for the most part, I hope, use that conscionable care, and faithful diligence, in the discharge of their Duty, that I may very well spare my pains upon this Head:
And

And profess my self more willing to learn of them, than prescribe to them, and therefore go on to the Duty of the People towards their respective Pastors and Teachers.

Now the special and particular Duties of the People towards their respective Ministers are such as these.

They must consider them as the *ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God,* 1 Cor. 4. 1. as their Spiritual Guides and Governours *who watch for their Souls,* Heb. 13. 17. and consequently must *esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, accounting them worthy of double honour:* 1 Th. 5. 13. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Especially must avoid all irreverent thoughts, speeches, or behaviour towards them, for the sake of their Function, remembering that *He who despises them, despises him that sent them:* Luke 10. 16. considering also that all such irreverence and contempt, will be a *grief to their Souls,* and in a great measure render their ministry unprofitable. Heb. 13. 17. Yea, it is their Duty to give them all due encouragement, and aid in the discharge of their work, avoiding all *false teachers, and deceitful workers, which cause divisions and offences, contrary to sound doctrine.* Rom. 16. 17. 18. It becomes them to advise with them in their doubts, concerning the state of their Soul, and to receive their advice, with deference to their judgment, together with joy and thankfulness: It is their duty to attend constantly upon their publick teaching, hearing without vain curiosity, censoriousness and pride, receiving their instruction with gravity, seriousness, attention, meekness, humility, with honest and good Hearts, Luke 8. 1. 18. Acts 17. 11. Jam. 1. 21. that they

1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.
Eph. 5. 1.
Heb. 13. 7.

1 Cor. 14. 40.
11. 16.
Heb. 13. 17.

Gal. 6. 6.

1 Cor. 11. 14.

Mal. 3. 8.
Rom. 2. 22.

they may grow thereby. They must follow their good Example, submit to their reproof, and be subject to all decent, orderly, useful Rules and Usages, established in a lawful manner, by their authority and consent, without making any disorderly, unpeaceable, schismatical opposition to them. And for as much as *they minister to them in spiritual things, it is their duty to minister to them in carnal*, with a cheerful and willing mind, remembering that *the Labourer is worthy of his hire*, and that our Blessed Lord himself Ordained, *that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*. The least certainly which they can do, is to abhor, and heedfully decline the unjust and Sacrilegious defrauding them of their settled necessary maintenance, whereby they will be rendred contemptible, and the Name of God blasphemed in the world.

3. Men may be considered as Members of a Common-Wealth, and then they are either Magistrates, or private Persons, I will in a very few words, point at the Duties of both.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

Magistrates are either Supreme or Subordinate.

1 Sam. 23. 3.

Eccl. 5. 8.

Dan. 4. 17.

Rom. 13. 4.

Now there can be no doubt but that *they who rule over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God*, knowing that *there is one who is higher than the highest, who ruleth among the children of men*, to whom they are accountable for all their doings. They ought, as becomes the Fathers of their Countries, to be tender of their Subjects good, preferring the common welfare, before the gratifying their

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own inclinations, or the interest of single Persons. They are bound to administer Justice in Truth and Uprightness; protect the innocent, deliver those that suffer wrong; encourage the vertuous, check, punish, and suppress the Wicked, and further Gods honour and glory, and the practice of true Religion to their power.

*Isa. 49. 23.
Job. 29. 14, 15.*

Subordinate or inferiour Magistrates, regarding the Oaths which they have taken, must be diligent and faithful in the execution of their respective Offices, without covetousness, partiality, or corrupt affection, to the Glory of God, the Honour of their Sovereign, and the peace and prosperity of the Community.

Ex. 18. 21.

Ex. 23. 2, 3.

The People must submit themselves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake: To the King as supream, and to Governours as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. They must be loyal, submissive, and obedient, honouring them in their hearts, serving them with their Persons and Estates, in a just and lawful manner, rendring to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour, without fraud or murmuring, especially must take heed of Sedition, faction, resistance and rebellion; shunning those who meddle with what do's not belong to them, or are given to change. And all this they must do, not only for wrath but for Conscience sake, and this not only to such Princes as are gracious, and gentle, just, kind and pious, but

1 Pet. 2. 17:

1 Pet. 2. 17.

*Rom. 13 7.
5.*

Prov. 24. 21.

- 1 Pet. 2. 18.** even to those that are defective in integrity, justice and mercy, committing themselves to Gods care and Providence, who knows how to deliver, or recompence those who suffer wrong. We must bless those who govern well, and gratefully acknowledge the happy effects of their good Government. And if any fail in their Administration, must forbear rude and insolent censures, and be
- 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.** more frequent and fervent in our Supplications and Prayers to God, to endue them
- Ija. 11. 2.** with the Spirit of judgment, counsel, and the fear of our Lord, with understanding and wisdom, truth, uprightness and courage, whereby they
- 2 Cor. 1. 10.** may be enabled to go in and out before the People committed to their charge, and whereby the People may live quiet and peaceable lives under them in all godliness and honesty.

This is a plain account of the more general and principal Relations, which Men stand in to each other, and of their respective duties which flow from them, I will only add a few words concerning the mutual Duties of some other Superiours and Inferiours, which are very fairly reducible to this Precept, and then proceed to the next Commandment.

- Tit. 2. 2.** Age is honourable, and a ground of Superiority, and it is the duty of the Aged especially, to be *sober, grave and temperate*, and
- Prov. 16. 31.** to be found *always walking in the way of righteousness*, in all things shewing themselves good examples and patterns to the young.

It is the duty of the young to *rise up before the hoary head and to honour the face of the old man*
And

And because *Wisdom is with the aged, and in length of days is understanding,* it becomes them in doubtful, and difficult cases, to ask and receive their advice, and to imitate their pious, and prudent example, especially they must take heed of mocking and despising them for the meer infirmities of Age, which is unnatural, and very provoking.

The rich Man must not shew himself high minded and insolent, despising and oppressing his poor Brother, always bearing in mind those remarkable words of the Wise Man, *he that oppresseth or despiseth the Poor, reproacheth his Maker.* 1 Tim. 6. 17.
Pro. 14. 31.

The poor Man must not envy the Rich: *His eye must not be evil because God is good:* Matth. 20. 15. But must rather rejoyce in his prosperity, and pray God to dispose and incline his Heart, to a sober, prudent, and charitable use of his Wealth, and if he be sober, prudent, and Charitable, must bless God for it, and give him his Just praise and commendation.

A Benefactor must not expect sordid, and unworthy compliances, from him to whom he hath been kind, neither may he without just cause twit and upbraid him with what he has done for him.

He who hath received kindnesses must be grateful to his Benefactor, honour and love him in his Heart, speak of his favours, and be ready to requite them, as there is opportunity to his power.

The more knowing or strong Christian must not despise the weak, but bear with Rom 15. 2.
his

his infirmities, and use his own greater knowledge, as far as may be, without offence, and to edification.

The weak Christian must not judge and condemn the strong, but rather listen to his instruction, that he himself may at length improve in knowledge, and receive profit by him.

Matth. 7. 12.

We ought always to bear in mind that great and fundamental rule of Equity. *Whatsoever we would that men should do to us, we also should do the same to them.* Let a Man suppose himself in the state and condition of other Men, and whatsoever he could reasonably and justly expect from them, let him do the same. For example, were I a Master, would I expect diligence and faithfulness from my Servant : Being a Servant, let me shew the same diligence and faithfulness to my Master : Let me suppose my self a Father, would I look for honour and obedience from my Son : Let me suppose my self a Son, and pay the same honour and obedience to my Father, and the like will hold proportionably in other cases.

Tit. 2. 10.

I have mentioned these things the more particularly and distinctly, because they are of great weight and moment, though too much neglected. The satisfaction of our Consciences, the comfort of our Lives, publick and private peace and quietness, the honour of God and our holy Religion depend upon the practice of them. By a careful performance of these things, we *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour*, and by the neglect
of

of them *cause his Name to be blasphemed in the world.* 1 Tim. 6. 1.

Besides the due observance of this Command hath the promise of a long and prosperous life, which should engage us to obey it. But this having been mentioned before, under the Duties of Children to their Parents, I proceed to the next Commandment, which is this.

Thou shalt do no Murder.

VI. Com.

The former Precept having provided for the honour which is due to Parents : This takes care for the preservation of their Offspring, *viz.* of all other men who spring, or are derived from them. Life is the greatest of all outward temporal Blessings, it is the foundation of all our Enjoyments, therefore we must be tender of it, and never be provoked to commit Murder. For the explication of this Precept I will

I. Shew you what Murder is. And then

II. I will shew you the great sinfulness of it. Now

I. I take Murder to be an advised, unjust, illegal taking away the life of any Person whatsoever. I say any Person whatsoever, including self Murder, as well as the Murder of our Neighbour. I say unjust, and illegal, partly to distinguish it from meer Casual Homicide, partly to except the cases of publick Justice, lawful War, and necessary self defence.

Where a Man kills another meerly by chance, having no design or intention so to do, having no malice, or ill will to the Person that is slain, I account this a very great misfortune, rather than a Sin, and cannot think the righteous and merciful God will impute it to him. But as for that sort of Man-Slaughter which is committed in sudden passion and fury, however humane Laws may distinguish, I doubt it will prove willful Murder in Gods Account : though if any allowances are to be made, he will doubtless allow all that is fit and reasonable to be allowed.

Num. 35. 16.

As to the case of publick Justice, I see no reason to doubt concerning the lawfulness of inflicting capital punishment upon notorious, and infamous Malefactors. God who is the Lord of Life and Death having constituted the supreme Magistrate his own Vice-gent, and intrusted him with the Sword, if he take away the Life of great Criminals, is not in the least guilty of Murder : Truly speaking *the Vengeance is Gods, he repays it*, the Magistrate is but the instrument in his Hand, to execute what he himself hath determined to be done.

Rom. 13. 4.

Gen. 9. 6.

Rev. 13. 10.

And as to a just, necessary War, though there be much Blood shed, yet this effusion of Blood is not Murder. For War being a sort of an Appeal to God, such as perish in Battle, are perhaps not so properly in the language of Scripture, said to perish by their Enemies, as to fall by the hand of the Lord. And

As to private self defence, in case of a violent assault, or eminent danger, where

a Man sees no way of escape, to take away the Life of such an Aggressor, is so far from being Murder, that he who do's it may rather be said to preserve Life, than kill.

But though the Letter of the Law principally aims at actual Murder, which a Man commits either by force or fraud, with his own Hand, or which he tempts, provokes, encourages, commands, abets, or aids another to commit : Yet according to our Saviours interpretation, there are many other things which come within the compass of the Prohibition.

Causeless anger, reproachful speeches, implacable grudge, desire of revenge, want of compassion, morose behaviour, stirring up strife, hurting, wounding, or maiming our Neighbour, and the willful exposing him to needless danger, are prohibited, either as having a direct tendency to occasion Murder, or as lesser degrees of it. Says the Apostle St. John, *He that hateth his Brother is a murderer.* *Math. 25. 22.*
Ex. 21. 18.

1 Sam. 12. 8.

1 Ep. Jo. 3. 15.

What then shall we say to the furious and fiery Zealot, who usurps the Magistrates office, sets up for a publick Reformer, and executes Malefactors without any call, or Warrant so to do ?

What to the sly Politician, who digs a Pit for his Neighbour, trappanning him into evil and dangerous practices, on purpose to get rid of him ?

What to the Man of honour (as some love to call themselves who know nothing of it) that engages himself in Duels, for a meer Punctilio

lio, or worse, in the heat of his Blood, running at least the hazard of losing his own Life, or of taking away his Neighbours ?

What to her, who prostitutes her Body, and afterwards to conceal her shame, attempts to destroy the fruit of her Lust ? Doubtless these and all such like Offenders, are Murderers in the sight of God, who judges righteous Judgment, and must expect a severe punishment, for their Sin is great : Which is the next thing I am to shew, *viz.*

Acts 28. 4.
Ex. 21. 12.

2. The sinfulness of Murder. Now it is a highly aggravated Sin, because it is committed against the light of Nature, and the light of Scripture, and the Laws of every well ordered Common-wealth. It is an offence against the Sovereign Dominion and Prerogative of God, who alone is the Lord of Life and Death : It is an usurpation upon the Magistrate, and an affront to his government, who *is the minister of God to execute wrath upon evil doers* : 'Tis a contempt of the dignity of humane Nature, shewing no reverence to the Image of God, it is an irreparable injury to the party Murder'd, for *who can call back the Spirit, but the Father of Spirits, who breathed into man the breath of life, and made him become a living Soul* ? It is an injury to his Friends, bereaving them of the comfort, and often times of the support of their Life : An injury to the Publick, by depriving it of an useful Member. Yea it is a very great injury to the Murderer himself, exposing him to the wounds of a guilty Conscience, to fearfulness and trembling,

hatred,

hatred and contempt, to a violent Death in this World, and everlasting Torments in the next.

Neither can I esteem self-Murder a less Heinous and deadly Sin ; for this likewise is an affront to the Dominion and Authority of God, and a contempt, and destruction of his Image, a Violation of that great Law of self-preservation, and a wrong to the Persons Relatives, and to the Publick : Injustice and Sacrilege against our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed our Bodies as well as our Souls, and a despight to the Holy Ghost whose Temples we are, and usually proceeds from unruly passion, discontent, distrust of Providence, despair, and want of resolution to bear Misfortunes, Trouble, and Hardship.

But if the Murder of the Body be so great a Sin, how grievously aggravated a Sin must the Murder of Mens Souls be ! What will become of such who *with hold the key of knowledge*, *Matth. 23. 13.* or corrupt the Word of Life : Who *shut men out of the Kingdom of Heaven*, and lead them into the way of Destruction, who tempt, advise, fright, or compel them to any ungodly, and wicked Designs or Practices ! *O my soul, come not thou into the secret of these destroyers, neither be thou united to them,* *Gen 49. 6.* for assuredly their Plagues will be wonderful.

But suppose we are guilty of none of these great and enormous Crimes and Injuries : Yet there is something further required of us. As it is strictly forbidden to take away Life, so likewise we are commanded to use all honest and

and lawful endeavours to preserve Life; *Math. 23. 35.* feeding the Hungry, cloathing the Naked, relieving the Oppressed, protecting the Innocent, preventing quarrels, reconciling differences, discovering intended Mischeifs, and as far as in us lies promoting and encouraging mutual Good-will, Peace, Concord, and Brotherly love. To do this is to come up to the positive part of this Precept. Especially, if to preserve our Brothers Soul, we are careful to advise and reprove him with temper and love, as there is occasion, and always set him a good Example.

VII. Com.

Thou shalt not commit Adultery.

There is no doubt but the principal end of this Law, as delivered to the *Jews*, was to prohibit and prevent the Violation of the Marriage-Bed, by attempting the Affection or Chastity of any Mans Wife; And whoever shall yeild to any such solicitations and attempts, is guilty of a Sin hateful both to God, and Man.

Prov. 2. 17.

1 Cor. 6. 15, 19.

For Adultery is the willful Profanation of Gods Ordinance, and the deliberate breach of a solemn Vow made in the presence of God and the Congregation. A dishonour to Christ, whose Members we are, and the Pollution of the Temple of the Holy Ghost. It wounds a Man of his Honour, robs him of his dearest Property, wastes his Estate, brings confusion into Families, bereaves him of his content and quiet, and oftentimes ex-

poses

poses him to many and great dangers.

And whosoever is guilty of it, hath just reason to expect Shame and Poverty, Diseases and Death : However the Wrath of God, and everlasting Damnation will overtake such a one, unless sincere Repentance prevent : And yet, which is a terrible consideration, Sins of this kind draw a multitude of other Sins after them, and peculiarly harden the Heart, and dispose it to impenitency : It being expressly affirmed of the Adulteress, *which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the Covenant of her God, that her house inclineth to death, and her paths unto the dead, none that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.*

Prov. 6. 33.
5. 10, 11.
Heb. 13. 4.
Rev. 21. 8.

Prov. 2. 18, 19.

Now though the actual Violation of the Marriage-Bed, be the Sin expressly forbidden; yet, according to our Saviours interpretation, and the whole Tenour of the Gospel, all uncleanness of Heart, Speech, or Behaviour, is comprehended under the general Prohibition.

Unnatural Lusts, Mixtures, and Pollutions, not to be named among Christians, Rape, Incest, Polygamy, causeless Divorce, Fornication, and Concubinage, impure Desires, immodest Speeches, lightness in Behaviour, Softness, Effeminacy, lascivious and wanton Gestures, an adulterous Eye, indecent Apparel, or Whorish Attire, indulgence of the Appetite, in excessive Eating and Drinking, giving way to Sloath and Idleness, frequenting lewd places and Company, listening to inticing Speeches, lewd Plays,

Lev. 18.
Eph. 5. 12.
Col. 3. 5.
Matth. 5. 28.
Eph. 4. 29.
Isa. 3. 16.
2 Pet. 2. 14.
Prov. 7. 10.
Ezek. 16. 49.

Prov. 23. 2, 3. Plays, wanton Songs, filthy Stories, and
 7. 25. such like, are all forbidden, either as direct
 6. 24. breaches of this Precept, or as the causes,
 signs, temptations to, or occasions of Adul-
 tery and Uncleanness.

The positive part of the Precept, is to
 keep our Bodies in Temperance, Soberness,
 and Chastity, either by the seasonable using
 the remedy which God hath provided, or
 by mortifying all our carnal and corrupt af-
 fections, *keeping under our bodies*, and bring-
 ing them into subjection to the Spirit, by
 fasting, abstinence and Prayer. We must
make a Covenant with our eyes, not looking upon
a woman to lust after her, but rejoyce in the wife
of our youth, and be satisfied at all times in her
love : We must take heed to our Tongues,
 not suffering *any filthy communication to proceed*
out of our mouths, and stop our Ears against such
 as is uttered by others, and endeavour to
 preserve the like Purity and Chastity in all
 other Persons, as far as we can.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

Jeb. 31. 1.

Col. 3. 8.

Matth. 5. 28.

Prov. 5. 18, 19.

Col. 3. 8.

VIII. Com.

Thou shalt not Steal.

Eph. 5. 28.

The two former Precepts being intended,
 the one for the safety of our Neighbours Per-
 son, the other for the preservation of the
 Chastity of his Wife, which ought always
 to be very dear to him, she being one flesh
 with himself, this principally aims at secu-
 ring him in the undisturbed, quiet, comfort-
 able enjoyment of his lawful Goods, and Pos-
 sessions, forbidding the getting, withhold-
 ing

ing or keeping any thing, either by force, or fraud, from him, which by Law, or Equity belongs to him.

Excessive desire of Wealth, and making hast to be Rich, removing the ancient bounds of possession, spoiling a Man under pretence of Religion, as *Abab* and *Jezabel* did *Naboth*; artificial, fraudulent, dishonest Bargains, false Weights and Measures, and a deceitful Ballance, warranting that to be good, which a Man certainly knows to be bad, and disparaging that, which a Man knows to be really good, as those mention'd by *Solomon*, who say *it is naught, it is naught, but when they are gone make their boast*. Making advantage of a Mans necessity by Oppression, or Extortion, Borrowing without a settled intention and endeavour to pay again. Exacting an unmeet, or unreasonable Pledge, and detaining it beyond the appointed time, withholding the Hire of the Poor Labourer: Refusing or neglecting to make Restitution, in case of any wrong, when it is in our power to restore the thing, or if not, to satisfie for the wrong done, are all in fair and equitable Construction, reducible to this general Prohibition. Yea, I am perswaded, that every reasonable, thinking, sober Man, will readily own, that the inticing, or decoying of any Persons, especially the young and unexperienced, into that very dangerous practice of Gameing, as also the engageing Men in litigious, vexatious, frivolous, expensive Law-suits, are both inexcusable Violations of this Commandment. For, as I observed,

Heb. 13. 4.
Prov. 28. 20,
21, 22, 28.
1 King. 21. 10.
Prov. 11. 1.

Prov. 20. 14.

Dent. 24. 14.

Psal. 37. 21.

Dent. 24. 13.
Lev. 19. 13.
Jam. 5. 4.
Ex. 22. 5, 6.
Luke 19. 8, 9.

it

it matters not, whether the wrong be done by open Violence, or secret Craft, both are Sins, both very great ones, though the one may in some respects be a more aggravated Sin than the other:

Prov. 6. 11.

Yea the giving way to Sloth and Idleness, to Prodigality, Luxury and Riot, the causes and Companions of Theft, are likewise forbidden.

Psal. 50. 18.

Yea whosoever encourages, abets, conceals, and consents to these, and such like injurious designs and practices, is truly guilty in the sight of God.

Math. 7. 12.

These, and all such like attempts and practices, are contrary to that great and undeniable Rule of Equity, to do to others, as we would be done by our selves. They disturb the peace, order, and good government of Societies, they expose to shame and danger in this Life, and to Damnation in the next; for *Neither the unrighteous, i. e. the unjust, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

1 Cor. 6. 9.

1 Tim. 1. 10.

And if it be thus sinful and dangerous to steal a Man's Goods, how complicated a Sin is it, to steal and carry away his Person, to sell and enslave him, or make a gain of him! How inexcusable a Crime, to decoy, trapan, and carry away young Virgins, or others, forcing them many times, to dishonourable and vile Marriages!

Rom. 13. 7.

Yea, if it be so great a Sin to injure private Persons, what shall we say to such as wrong the State, by withholding necessary settled Customs and Tribute, by diminishing

or

or debasing the current Coin, by imbezelling the National Stores, and wasting the publick Treasures?

What to the sacrilegious pilaging of consecrated Places, causeless alienation of Church lands, withholding settled Tythes and Offerings, Simoniackal Presentations, defrauding the Widow and the Orphan, withholding or perverting charitable Gifts and Endowments? These things assuredly, if any, are the violation and betraying of a sacred Trust. This, if any, is doubtless an *evil Covetousness*. They who are guilty of it, *consult shame*, as the Prophet speaks *to their own houses*, and have just reason to fear that their unrighteous gain should never prosper, but that *the stone should cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber should answer it*, and draw down heavy Wo upon them, for endeavouring to *establish themselves by such iniquity*.

This is an account of the principal things forbidden in the Precept. The positive duties are of this kind. Its general end is to take care by all lawful and honest means to preserve our own, and our Neighbours outward Estate and Possessions. And in order hereto we must be just and honest in all our Actions, true and faithful in all matters of contract and bargain: Must engage in a lawful Calling, and use diligence and industry in it, and be provident and frugal in our way of living; and then if any will bereave us of our Rights, we may, when other means fail, secure our Property and Possessions, by a prudent and charitable use of the Law.

Mal. 3. 8.

Rom. 2. 22.

Acts 5. 3. 4.

Ex. 22. 22.

Deut. 24. 17.
21.

Hab. 2. 9, 10.

1 Cor. 7. 20.

Rom. 12. 11.

1 Tim. 5. 8.

Eph. 4. 28.

In a word, as the Apostle directs, let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour with his own hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Such diligence, by the Blessing of God, would suffice for a necessary comfortable subsistence : And such Charitable affection towards our Neighbour, would effectually restrain others (in the ordinary method of Providence) from a forcible invasion, or a deceitful and underhand surreption of our property.

IX. Com.

Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.

Ecc. 7. 1.

Prov. 22. 1.

Forasmuch as a mans interest, safety, quiet, and content very much depends upon a fair reputation, or good name : This Precept takes care for the preservation of it, by forbidding whatsoever is directly, or indirectly injurious to it.

Ex. 23. 1.

Prov. 6. 19.

1 Kin. 21.

The thing especially forbid, is the giving false Testimony, or Evidence against our Neighbour, either in our own Persons, or suborning and bribing others to do it, in matters concerning Life, or outward Estate. But by equitable construction, many other Sins and offences come within the compass of the Law.

1 Tim. 6. 4.

Matth. 7. 1.

Unreasonable Suspensions, and evil Surmises, unadvised rash Judging, misconstruction of a Mans intentions, words, and actions, listning to the false reports of every idle or malicious Talebearer, and spreading of such reports, devising odious and slanderous Accusations, pleading in a known evil Cause,

Lev. 19. 6.

Psal. 15. 3.

Cause, and silence in a just one, and refusing to hear a reasonable Defence, advising, countenancing, encouraging any of these things, and even the not hindring of them, when it is in our power, and when we are called to do it, are all of them in reason, and in Gods Account Breaches of this Commandment.

Lying of all sorts, in familiar and ordinary Conversation, is to be carefully shun'd, because it disposes and inclines to disregard truth in greater matters.

God is the God of Truth, and therefore *the lying lips are an abomination to him.*

Prov. 12. 2.

The Devil is a liar, and the father of it, and they who resemble him in lying, are confessedly his Children, and must be his companions for evermore, for *all liars shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

John. 8. 44.

Rev. 21. 8.

The positive Duties enjoined in this Precept, are the love of the Truth, plainness of Heart, and sincerity in our speech and conversation. A tenderness for our Neighbours good name, avoiding pragmatical and curious inquiry into his Behaviour. A willingness to hear, judge, and speak the best of him, disliking and discouraging Talebearers and Whispersers, who usually raise and spread ill reports, defending his innocence, covering his infirmities with love; hiding, excusing, extenuating his infirmities and failings, as far as Truth and Justice will permit. They who carefully do these things, observe and come up to the true meaning and intent of this Precept.

Lev. 19. 11.

Psal. 15. 2.

Zeek. 8. 16.

Lev. 19. 16.

Prov. 20. 19.

Prov. 17. 9.

X. Com.

Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbours House : Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbours Wife, nor his Man Servant, nor his Maid Servant, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is thy Neighbours.

All the foregoing Precepts of the Second Table of the Law forbid all injuries in word and deed : This extends to the very Heart, to the designs and counsels of Men, though they never come to light, or break forth into Act. It restrains all inordinate desires and affections. It obliges us to be so far from injuring our Neighbour in Body, Goods, or good Name, that we must not so much as wish or desire that any evil may befall him. We must be so far from corrupting his Wife, that we *must not look upon her to lust after her in our hearts* : So far from thrusting him out of his Lands, Possessions, Preferments, and Offices, that we must not hanker after them, but rather rejoyce in his prosperity. His better Parts, his larger Income, his quicker Trade, his more plentiful Crop, or greater Credit, must be no Eye sore to us ; we must admire, reverence, and praise the Divine Providence in the various exercises of it.

Math. 5 28.

But it will be asked whether all desire of whatsoever belongs to another Man be forbidden, and unlawful ? I answer no, nothing is forbid, but what is irregular and inordinate. But it will be ask'd when is desire irregular and inordinate ? Why here the answer also is plain

1. It is inordinate, when it is of a thing absolutely inalienable : And this is the case of the first branch of this Precept. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours wife.*

2. As to the desire of other things, I reply, if a Man desire that of his Neighbour, which to part with would be very prejudicial to him, or which he is very unwilling to part withal, if notwithstanding his knowledge of such prejudice and unwillingness, he still go on to desire such thing, and his desire be accompany'd with inward disquiet, anxiety, and vexation, much more if he seek, and use indirect, and underhand, and unlawful means to accomplish his desire, it is irregular and inordinate : I am sure he is very far from having learnt in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content, which yet is a very principal Precept of the Christian Religion. For

The positive part of this Precept requires, that we be contented with *such things as we have*, using the gifts of Gods bounty with moderation, and thankfulness, and a true delight in our Neighbours prosperity and welfare. And that in order thereto we purifie our Hearts, which are the fountain from whence proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adultery, Fornication, Theft, Blasphemy, Falsewitness, and all manner of injurious practice.

To say the truth, this is not so much a new Precept as to the substance of it, as a summary of all that went before, at least a fence to them, and a means to enable to the performance of them, for if inordinate desires

Heb. 13. 5

Matth. 15. 19.

Rom. 13. 10

were carefully check't, and suppress'd, there would be no such thing as Murder, Adultery, Theft, false Testimonies, and such like abominable practices.

This is a short and easie account of the Rule of our Obedience or the Substance, and design of the Ten Commandments, as expounded and reinforced by our Saviour, and his Apostles : And upon a view of the whole, the pious Christian, whose Heart trembles at the Word of God, will be apt to cry out, I see, O Lord, that *thy commandment is exceeding broad* : If all these things are required of us, who, O Lord, can be saved ! But, O Christian, *why art thou thus cast down, and why is thy Soul disquieted within thee ? Hope thou in God* : For the God whom thou serveest is no hard Master : He is the most just, kind, and gracious Master in the World. *His Commandments are not grievous, his yoke is easie, and his burden is light. What hath he done, or wherein hath he wearied us, to dispose us, to testify against him ?* Though to Men such Obedience, as he requires, may seem impossible, yet *with God all things are possible* : Though meer Nature, pure, unassisted Reason, is not able to perform the whole Will of God, yet *his grace is sufficient for us*, he can *work in us both to will and to do*, and *we can do all things through Christ who strengthneth us*. And sufficient grace he hath promised, even the assistance of his Holy Spirit, if we ask it of him, and sincerely apply our selves to, and persevere in the use of such means, as he hath appointed, to convey his Grace, and nourish and confirm us in all true goodness.

Supposing

Isa. 66. 2.

Psal. 119. 96.

Psal. 42. 51.

1 John 5. 3.

Matth. 11. 29.

Mic. 6. 3.

Matth. 19. 26.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Phil. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 12. 9.

Supposing therefore that Men have been so teachable, and well disposed, as by a diligent hearing, and reading the Word of God, both in publick and private, as to be thoroughly convinced that these are the great Doctrines and Precepts of the Christian Religion: And as well by conferring with their Spiritual Guides, and Christian Brethren, as by their own deep and serious Meditation, are perswaded of the great Excellence, and necessity of them, and arrived to a deliberate and settled Resolution of governing their Hearts and Lives by them, with due watchfulness, and perseverance, and be truly desirous to understand, what yet they want, to carry them on from Strength to Strength, and Faith to Faith, till they become *Perfect Men in Christ Jesus*; They must know that God himself, who best knows our state, hath enjoyned Prayer, and instituted the Sacraments, as great and effectual means to this end: And therefore I will now treat very briefly of these in their order, and shew you the Right use of them.

Now though Prayer is sometimes in Scripture, in a larger sense, taken for the whole Worship of God, all Religious Honour, Adoration and Reverence, Submission and devout Dependance, Confession, Supplication, Praise, Blessing and Thanksgiving being included in, or comprehended under it; yet here I shall rather consider it in a more restrained sense, understanding thereby, A Religious Invocation, or calling upon God, in the Name of Christ, founded in a due apprehension, and

sense of our own wants, and a settled persuasion of his Wisdom, Power, all-sufficient Goodness, and merciful inclination to supply all our wants, by granting us such things as we ask of him, which are agreeable to his Will. And thus to call upon the Divine Majesty, is a very powerful means to engage us to all holy Obedience. For

Such Prayer excites, quickens, confirms, and continually maintains a due and awful apprehension of the Divine Nature and Perfections, makes us sensible of our intire dependence upon God, the great and good Author, the never failing, free, and full spring of all our Abilities and Blessings.

By the constant exercise of it, God is very much in our thoughts, and we are very much in his presence; And who will offend whilst he actually thinks of the divine Majesty, and considers that he is under his immediate Eye and Inspection, and imploring his Favour and Blessing?

Mat. 25. 11. 'Tis a mighty guard against all the Temptations, which beset and intice us, in this frail, mortal state, *Watch and pray, says our Lord himself, that ye enter not into Temptation.*

Eph. 6. 10, 11, 16. It is a part of that Spiritual Armour, whereby we grow strong in the Lord, and quench all the fiery darts of the Devil.

It disposes to Humility and lowliness of Heart, being a constant Memento of our Frail, Sinful, Helpless state.

Rom. 12. 12. It works patience, by shewing us how unseemly it is to bring any perturbation, passion,

on, or distemper of mind along with us, into the presence of God; the *God of all patience, and love*, who hath Bowels of pitty and compassion, for all such as lay their griefs and sorrows before him, and cast all their care upon him.

It purifies the Heart from all low, sordid and abject desires, delivering it from the Cares, and Business of this present life, and setting it upon the things which are above.

It inspires us with noble and generous Resolutions, to endeavour after those things which we pray for: And indeed without this, it is only a meer wishing and woulding, or rather great and detestable Hypocrisie.

But besides this, if we further consider Prayer, as a part of instituted Worship, we shall yet discover more of the power of it; for in virtue of God's promise, it derives continual fresh supplies of Grace and Strength from above, it is the condition of obtaining the gift of the Holy Spirit. For, says our Saviour, *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* and if the good Spirit of God, go along with us, and work in our Hearts, and we work together with him, no Enemy can overcome us, no duty is too difficult to perform. It is true, that God sometimes prevents our earliest desires, and gives before we ask; but in the ordinary method of his proceedings with us, God expects and requires it of us, as a thing most agreeable to his own Wisdom, and best

best for us that we should ask before we receive.

But here it may very reasonably be asked, if Prayer be thus necessary and useful? Let us know,

I. What it is that we may, and must pray for? And,

II. In what manner we must pray, that so we may be heard?

I. As to the former, *viz.* What we may, and must pray for? The general Answer is, we must pray for such things only, *as are agreeable to the Will of God.* Now it is the Will of God that we should be sanctified and saved. Whatsoever therefore is necessary to our present sanctification, and future happiness, we are absolutely bound to ask of God, *who giveth liberally to all and upbraideth not.* But still it may be said, How shall we know what is agreeable to God's Will? How shall we understand what is necessary to be asked in order to our Sanctification and Salvation? Now here behold the great Grace and goodness of God towards us. The Son of God himself, who is in the Bosom of his Father, and perfectly understood his Will, in compassion to our blindness and ignorance hath directed us in this matter. He hath given us, not only a Rule, Pattern or Platform (as some speak) whereby to compose, and frame all our Prayers, but hath delivered an absolute Prayer, and obliged us to the use of it: For he who said, when ye pray

1 John 5. 14.

1 Thes. 4. 3.

Jam. 1. 5.

John 1. 18.

pray, say after this manner, said likewise, *Mat. 6. 9.*
 when ye pray, say, *Our Father which art in* *Luke 11. 2.*
Heaven, &c. Which words are a very plain
 Precept, and no Christian can excuse himself
 from guilt, who sway'd either by groundless
 prejudices, pride, or self conceit, refuses or
 neglects Obedience to it.

This Prayer which our Blessed Lord hath
 taught, and commanded us to use, consists of
 three Parts; A Preface, Petitions, and a Dox-
 ology, or Conclusion. And because the matter
 of it is unquestionable, being dictated by him,
 who was the Truth, and because in all the
 parts of it, it is very full and comprehensive,
 I will, the better to assist and direct your
 Devotion, offer at the Sense of it, in a short
 and plain Paraphrase: When therefore we
 say the Lord's Prayer (as we are bound fre-
 quently to do) let us suppose that we pray
 to this or the like effect.

Our Father which art in Heaven.

O Eternal and infinitely Glorious God, the
 Creator and preserver of the World;
 The Father of Angels and Men; The Father
 of our Lord Jesus Christ; Of whom the whole
 Family in Heaven and Earth is Named. Our
 Father, who hast loved us, and given us E-
 verlasting consolation and good hope through
 grace, predestinating us to the Adoption and
 Inheritance of Sons, whose Eye is continual-
 ly upon us, whose Fatherly care is always o-
 ver us, whose Bowels of Compassion yearn
 toward us: Who art more our Father than
 He

Heb. 12. 9.
Eph. 3. 14.
2 Thes. 2. 16.

Eph. 1. 5.
Rom. 8. 17.

He who begat us, who not only permittest, but encouragest our Addressees to thee, with assurance of a gracious acceptance. We draw near to thee, with all due Reverence, Love, Trust, and dutiful Affection, as becomes Children to a Father, and with all Charity, good will, and mutual Compassion, as becomes the Children of the same Father, who hath an affectionate, tender regard for his whole Offspring. We apply our selves to thee, the high and lofty One, who inhabitest Eternity, who dwellest in the High and Holy place, whose Throne is in the Heaven, whose Glory is above the Heaven, and yet art pleased with a Fatherly care and love, to look down from the Habitation of thy Glory upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth, to hear and help them: To thee we come, and make known our Requests unto thee.

Mat. 17. 28.
Isa. 57. 15.
Psal. 11. 4.
Psal. 113. 4, 5, 6.
Isa. 63. 15.

Hallowed be thy Name.

May it please thee, so to order the course of this World, that thy Name, which is Great, Excellent and Holy, may be feared in the Assembly of the Saints, and had in Reverence of all those who draw nigh to thee. That thou mayst receive the Glory which is due to the Incomprehensible Perfections of thy Nature, and the Marvellous Works of thy Creation and Providence, Every creature in Heaven and Earth, according to its capacity, confessing thy Majesty, declaring thy doings, speaking of thy Praise, ascribing all blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and Honour and Power, and Might to thee our God

Psal. 89. 7.
1 Cor. 16. 29.
Isa. 12. 4.
Rev. 5. 12.
7. 12.

God for ever and ever : For as thou absolutely requirest, so thou alone deservest such peculiar and incommunicable acknowledgments and Worship. And may every thing likewise, upon which thy Name is called, every thing which is dedicated to thy Service, and Holy unto thee, be used in a Holy manner, with peculiar Decency, Esteem, and Reverence. Especially may that holy Name by which we are called, be glorified in us, by all the fruits of blameless, and holy Conversation.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thou, even thou, our Heavenly Father, *Neb. 9. 6.*
art Lord alone, the Blessed and the only Potentate, the everlasting King, who by the right

Jer. 10. 10.

of Creation, and Preservation, hast a just Title to the most absolute and universal Dominion over all the Works of thy Hands : May the loftiness of Men be pulled down, and

Isa. 2. 17.

their haughtiness be laid low before thee, and may all Nations submit to the Septre of thy

Kingdom, which is a right Septre, and rejoyce and glory in their submission to thee.

Psal. 45. 6.

And since thou didst promise, and hast already begun to erect and establish the King-

Isa. 9. 6.

dom of the Messias, thy eternal and well-beloved Son, who shall judge the People righteously, and govern the Nations upon Earth,

*Psal. 67. 4.
2. 8.*

give him the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his Possession :

May all Kings bow down before him, and all Nations do him Service, by a zealous and effectual propagation of his Religion

Psal. 72. 11.

throughout the World. Let every Heart sincerely believe, and every Tongue readi-

Phil. 2. 11.

ly

Rev. 11. 15.

Psal. 72. 7.

Psal. 45. 4.

2 Cor. 10. 5.

Heb. 2. 14.

1 Cor. 15. 26.

Rev. 19. 6.

ly and joyfully confels, that he likewise is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. And thus the Kingdoms of the Earth, becoming the Kingdoms of Thee, and of thy Christ, may Piety and Righteousness, Truth, Mercy, and abundance of Peace, increase and flourish through all Generations. May'st thou go on prosperously in the exercise of thy Regal Power, casting down every thing which exalts it self against thee, destroying Sin, Satan and Death it self, and then do thou translate us, and all thy faithful Subjects to thy Heavenly Kingdom, where thou being all in all, shalt reign Universal, and Everlasting King, and we together with Angels, and Arch-Angels, and all the Host of Heaven, shall spend a blessed Eternity, in worshiping and praising the Glory of thy Majesty, saying *Amen*, Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth for ever and ever.

Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.

Isa. 9. 6. 7.

Rom. 7. 12.

And since thou alone, art the King of all the World, we are assured thou wilt manage all the Affairs of thy Kingdom, with incomprehensible Wisdom and Goodness, and govern all thy Subjects by a holy, just, and good Law, may we therefore submit to the various dispensations of thy Providence, and comply with all the manifestations of thy Will concerning us : Far be it from us ever to design, or attempt any thing inconsistent with thy Counsels, but rather make us as far as thou seest fit, instrumental in the Execution of them, at least

least suffer us not to murmur or repine against them, but compose our Spirits to a quiet resignation to thee in all things, ever acknowledging thy Will to be the wisest, and the best. We know, O Lord, that thy Counsel shall stand for ever, and that thou wilt do all thy Pleasure, we dare not pry into thy Secrets, but intirely leave the fullfilling every thing thou hast determined to be done, to thee in thy own time, and in thine own way, as thou shalt see best. But because revealed things belong to us, and to all thy Children, to whom they are revealed, dispose us to receive all thy Commands with dutiful affection, and reverence, and to perform them all in the best manner we can, with a perfect Heart and with a willing Mind, knowing that thou searchest all Hearts. May our Obedience, as far as is consistent with our present State and infirmities, and in proportion to the dispensations of thy Grace, be as unconstrained and free, as vigorous and chearful, as universal and persevering, as is the Obedience of the blessed Angels, who continually attend upon thy Throne, hearken to thy voice, execute thy pleasure, and esteem it their highest glory, and greatest happiness to serve thee, and to obey thy Will.

Luke 22. 42.

Ija. 46. 10.

Prov. 21. 30.

Deut. 29. 29.

1 Chr. 28. 9.

Psal. 103. 20.

Give us this Day our Daily Bread.

And now, O Blessed God, our Heavenly Father, having thus expressed the sincere and fervent desires of our Hearts, for the honour of thy Name, the glory and prosperity of thy

Job. 23. 12.

Psal. 145. 15.

Matth. 6. 26.

Job. 14. 14.

Prov. 20. 17.

31. 27.

1 *Tim.* 6. 8.

Prov. 30. 8. 9.

Lam. 3. 23.

thy Kingdom, and for the maintaining the Authority of thy Laws (all which are dearer to us than our very Lives) we are bold to recommend our whole selves, our Souls and Bodies, to thy Fatherly care and good Providence : Nothing doubting, but that thou who cloathest the Grasse of the Field, and providest for the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts of the Earth, wilt be mindful of us thy Children, and supply all our real wants, by affording us our necessary food in due season. We do not presume to ask our whole Portion at once, but desire always to continue in thy Family, under thy care and love, and to depend upon thee day by day, during our whole appointed time. Neither dare we ask the superfluities of Life : Much less would we take any thing without thy leave, or eat the Bread of oppression, idleness, and deceit. The sum of our desire is, that thou wouldst preserve the Life which thou hast given us, and make it easie and comfortable to us, by delivering us from unnecessary cares, vain fears, and unprofitable dejections, or doubtings concerning our bodily sustenance, by affording us food and rayment, health and strength, quiet habitations, and moderate refreshments, granting every thing which nature requires, and withholding nothing that is suitable to the condition and place, in which thy Providence hath set us. And as our necessities are daily renewed, and may increase upon us, so let thy loving-kindness be renewed every Morning, and dispence the Gifts of thy Bounty in proportion to our
several

several wants. And if at any time thou shalt open thy hand liberally, and bestow more than what is needful for us, give us likewise ability to use and enjoy thy Gifts, with Moderation, Charity and Thankfulness: Or if our Portion should be very small, yet still let us be contented and thankful, remembring that we have more than we deserve, that we are less than the least of all thy mercies. It is thy Blessing and Influence alone, which adds strength to thy Creatures, and makes them serviceable to us; may we never want it, may it always be upon us in the use of all thy Gifts.

Phil. 4. 6.

Gen. 32. 10.

Mat. 4. 4.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

Having thus remembred these frail mortal Bodies, surely we can never forget our precious and immortal Souls; but recommend them to thy tenderest compassion and love. Thou givest us leave to call thee Father, and we rejoyce and glory in this our Relation to thee, we intirely depend upon thee, we live daily upon thy gracious allowance; But notwithstanding this our Relation to thee, and dependance upon thee; we must confess, with sorrow and confusion of face, that thou hast nourished and brought up Children who have rebelled against thee, whereby we are Debtors to thy Justice, and liable to a severe Condemnation: But who is a God like unto thee, who pardonest Iniquity, and passest by Transgression, who retainest not thy Anger for ever, because thou delightest in Mercy! We flee unto thee for pardon and

Ezek. 4. 6.

Isa. 1. 2.

Luk. 11. 4.

Rom. 6. 23.

Mis. 7. 18.

I

peace.

Luke 15. 18. peace. Though we are no more worthy to
 1 Kings 8. 39. be called thy Children, yet hear thou in Hea-
 ven thy dwelling place, and forgive us for
 thy mercy sake. Though we have been un-
 mindful of the Duty of Children, yet do
 not thou cast off the Bowels of a Father, but
 receive us now we come to our selves, and
 return to thee again, and embrace us with
 the Arms of thy mercy : Like as a Father
 Mal. 3. 17. pitieth and spareth his Son in whom he de-
 Psal. 103. 13. lighteth, so do thou pity and spare us, thy
 sorrowful, distressed, and penitent Children.
 But though we are thus Importunate for
 Pardon, and Peace with thee ; yet we dare
 not ask it but upon thy own Terms : Thou
 hast expressly assured us, that if we forgive
 Men their Trespases, thou our Heavenly
 Mat. 6. 14, 15. Father, wilt also forgive us, our Trespas-
 ses. We chearfully submit to this Condi-
 tion. We acknowledge it just and equal, to
 be kindly affected towards all our Brethren
 Mat. 18. 21. and ready to forgive those who offend
 us ; All whose offences, are few, slight, and
 inconsiderable, in comparison of our many,
 great, and heinously aggravated offences, a-
 gainst thy Divine Majesty. And therefore
 in Conformity to thy Example, and in O-
 bedience to thy Command, from the bottom
 of our Hearts, we forgive our Bretheren, and
 beg that thou likewise wouldst pity and for-
 give them : And we trust that this mer-
 ciful and forgiving Temper, which thou hast
 wrought in our Hearts, is an Earnest and
 Pledge, to assure us, that according to thy
 gracious Promise thou wilt pity and forgive
 us.

And

**And lead us not into Temptation.
But deliver us from Evil.**

Psal. 103. 30

4. 9.

Eph. 3. 8.

Psal. 36. 7.

Psal. 32. 1; 20

Blessed, for ever Blessed, be thy Name for thy Fatherly Pity and Compassion towards us! How do we admire, adore, and praise the unsearchable Riches of thy Grace! How excellent is thy loving kindness! How happy are they whose Sins thou coverest, and whose Iniquities thou wilt remember no more! Thy favour O God is better than life it self: O that we might be sanctified throughout, both in Soul, Body, and Spirit, *1 Thes.* 5. 23. so as never, by any willful Relapses into Sin, to return to our former state of Enmity, and incur thy displeasure again. We are sensible of our Corruption and Frailty, we know we have Enemies both from within and without, and that there is no State and Condition of Life, but what hath its peculiar Difficulties and Dangers, and therefore desire to continue under the shadow of thy wings, who alone art able to guide, uphold and preserve us. *Psal.* 57. 14. We could as far as is agreeable with the Wisdom and Goodness of thy Providence, be free from any great and dangerous Temptations; however suffer us not, at any time, rashly to expose our selves to them, nor ever to be hurt by them: Or if at any time, for the Trial of our sincerity and stedfastness, thou shalt permit us to be Tempted, be pleased also to proportion our Strength to our Tri- *1 Cor.* 10. 13.

als, and make a way for our escape, by affording an assistance equal to them. Never leave us to our selves, nor deliver us up to the Will of our Enemies, but so guard us by thy Providence, and uphold us by thy Power, guide us by thy Counsel, and comfort us by thy Word, and support and encourage us by the continual Influences of thy Grace, and consolations of thy Spirit, that neither the Corruption and Treachery of our own Hearts, nor the Allurements and Pleasures, nor the Terrors and Calamities of the World, may be so far a Snare to us, as to remove us from our Integrity, or endanger our falling from thy favour and love. O that neither Tribulation nor distress, Famine nor Nakedness, Peril nor Sword, Death nor Life, Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature, may be able to hinder us from the performance of our Duty, or separate us from thy Friendship and Love: Never leave us nor forsake us, but let thy gracious Presence be with us, to defend and deliver us from all Evil, from the Evil of our corrupt and carnal Affections, and from the evil of this present wicked World, from the Power of the Devil, that malicious, subtil, and restless Tempter, whose incessant work it is to seduce, and destroy us. Especially deliver us from thy Wrath, and from everlasting Death, by perfecting the Work of thy Grace in us, and enabling us always to do that which is well-pleasing in thy sight.

**For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power,
er, and the Glory, for ever. Amen.**

These, O Heavenly Father, are the sincere and ardent desires of us thy Children, for the effectual advancement of thy Honour, and Glory, and for the promoting our own present Comfort and everlasting Happiness: And to whom should we apply our selves but to Thee the great and glorious King of the World, who art Jealous for the Honour of thy Name, and whose tender mercies are over all thy works. To whom should we come but to thee the Infinite and inexhaustible Fountain of all goodness, who hast an absolute Right over all things to dispose of them, for thy own Glory, and thy Creatures Good, and irresistible Power, to do whatsoever thou pleasest, exceeding abundantly above all that we can either ask or think. Thou alone art our Hope, and our Help, and we assure our selves, that thou wilt grant all our requests which are for thy Honour, and our own, and others Good: And we will as it is meet, right, and our bounden duty, at all times, and in all places glorifie thee, with the sacrifices of Praise and thanksgiving; saying, Thine O Lord is the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majesty. For all that is in the Heaven, and the Earth is thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as Head above all; all Honour, Love, Adoration and, Obedience, be Ascribed to thee

Neh. 9. 6.

Ezek. 39. 25.

Psal. 145. 9.

Psal. 24. 1, 3.

Jer. 32. 17-27.

Eph. 3. 20.

Psal. 50. 23.

1 Chro. 29. 11.

throughout all Ages, World without end, *Amen.* So be it. The Lord fulfil all our Petitions, *Amen.*

From this short and plain Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, you may perceive something of its design and substance. I am very sensible that it falls extremely short of its full sense and intention; but as it is, it suffices for my present purpose, which is to direct you in the matter of your Prayers, and the sum is this: You must principally desire God's glory, and your own, and others everlasting happiness, together with the enjoyment of such Worldly accommodations, as may Minister to this great End.

Phil. 29. 13.

And here let no man deceive himself. Let no man think that Prayer is only the Labour of the Lip, and that if he hath said over a few good Petitions, the business is done, and he need concern himself no farther about it; no there is a certain disposition and temper of Soul, required in him that prays, to make his prayers ascend with force, and find acceptance with God: And therefore I will now proceed to the next thing I proposed, *viz.*

Phil. 4. 6.

To consider in what manner we must pray, that so we may be heard. Now whereas Prayer includes such a due sense and acknowledgment of our own Wants, and Weakness, and such a clear and steadfast perswasion of God's infinite Wisdom, Power, and All sufficient Goodness to supply them, as engages us to make known the requests of our Souls to him, whensoever we draw near to God, we must do it with all possible Seriousness and Reverence.

rence. Our *Words must be few*, Pertinent and *Psal. 95. 6.*
 Weighty ; Our Behaviour, Grave and Com-
 posed ; Our Gestures decent, lowly, and sub- *Eccl. 5. 2.*
 missive, always remembering that *God is in*
Heaven, and we upon Earth.

Whosoever thou art, that takest upon thee
to speak unto the Lord, and to make thy supplica- *Job. 8. 5.*
tions to the most High, Thou oughtest in the
 first place to consider thy self as one, who
 was once a Rebel, and an Apostate, an un-
 grateful and an unworthy Creature, and
 therefore must appear before him, in the *Job. 16. 26.*
 Name of a Mediator, *even Jesus Christ the*
Righteous, who is the Propitiation for the sins of *1 Job. 2. 1.*
the World, and in Vertue of his own Merito-
 rious performances, offers up the Prayers of
 the Saints, *through whom we have access by one*
Spirit unto the Father. And being thus duly *Rev. 8. 3.*
 Affected with thy own Sinful, Miserable,
 Helpless State, Thou must *abhor thy self in* *Eph. 2. 18.*
dust and ashes, blush and be ashamed, and in the
 anguish and bitterness of thy Soul, lament
 thy base treachery and ingratitude towards
 God, and thy neglect and Cruelty towards
 thy own Soul, and forever disclaim, and hate
 the evil of thy doings, and resolve with all
 sincerity, and endeavour with all thy might
 to do so no more ; knowing that *God does*
not bear Sinners, (i. e.) such Sinners, as allow
 themselves in their Sins : *But if any Man be* *Job. 9. 31.*
a Worshipper of God, Penitent and truly Reli-
 gious, *Him he beareth.* And because the things
 which thou askest of God, in thy Prayer, are
 of an inestimable value, and absolutely ne-
 cessary to thy present Comfort, and everlast-

Jon. 3. 8.

Rom. 8. 26.

Jam. 5. 16.

Eph. 6. 18.

Luke 18. 1.

Mar. 7. 26.

Psal. 77. 8, 9.

ing happiness ; Thou must shake off all coldness, laziness and indifferency in thy Devotion, and cry mightily to God in deep sighs, and unutterable groans, with zeal, fervency, and importunity, using all kinds of *Supplication and Prayer, watching thereto with all perseverance* ; nothing discouraged at a Repulse, not fainting though thou art often deny'd ; not in the least thinking, *that God is unmindful of his Promise, hath forgotten to be Gracious, or shut up his tender Mercies in displeasure.* For tho' meer importunity can never work any change in the mind and purpose of God, so as to prevail with him, to act contrary to his Nature and his Counsels ; yet we must not conceive of him, as bound up by the inflexible Law, of a Fatal necessity, but that he is at liberty to dispence his Gifts in the wisest and best way : And it is agreeable both to his wisdom and goodness, not to give (at least in the common way of his Providence) without asking with zeal and importunity. And the Reason may be because such fervent and continual Prayer, is very efficacious to work a marvellous alteration in a Man's temper and practice, by encreasing and confirming his Reverence of the Divine Majesty, by teaching him to set a greater value upon the things he Prays for, purifying his Affections, calming his Passions, strengthening his Resolutions, and keeping his Mind always awake and intent upon his great End ; whereby he is more and more qualified for favour and acceptance with God. And if thou findest this happy change in thy self, bless God for it, and go on still to ask,
and

and *ask in faith*, in a firm and steadfast persuasion that God for Christ's sake, will hear and help thee; and *ask without Wavering*, all fluctuation, hesitancy, and despondence of Mind, arguing a proportionable distrust of God's Power, or Will to help: And if notwithstanding all this importunity, and humble faith and Confidence in the Power and Mercy of God, thou findest that thou art still in Want, and often denied what thou thinkest expedient for thee. Yet still go on to pray, and resign thy self with the most profound submission and composedness of Spirit to the Will of God; saying, *not my will, but thine be done*. Yea, thou must remember always to add Thanksgiving to thy Prayer, accounting it very unreasonable, and presumptuous to expect future Mercies, unless thou art truly thankful, for what thou hast already received. Nay thou must thus judge, that there is great reason to fear, that an ungrateful temper should provoke God to take away, and to stop the Current of his Blessings upon thee for the time to come: And this most assuredly thou must look for, if to Ingratitude towards God, thou shouldest foolishly and wickedly add uncharitableness to men. For *it is the Will of God that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath*: And it is expressly commanded, that *when we stand praying, we should forgive if we have ought against any, that so our Father also which is in Heaven may forgive us our Trespases*. When the Spirit is calm, sedate, and composed, it is in the fittest disposition to approach the God of Love, Patience and Mercy,

Jam. 1. 5, 6.

Luke 22. 42.

Phil. 4. 6.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

Mark 11. 25.

Gal. 5. 22.

Rom. 14. 18.

Ex. 34. 6. 7.

Mercy, and to receive the influences of his holy Spirit, whose fruits are peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, and goodness, things acceptable to God, and approved of Men. The more like we are to God, the surer we are that he will hear and bless us; and nothing renders us so like him, as slowness to wrath, and readiness to forgive, as universal good will, benignity, long-suffering, love, and compassion to all the World.

Such ought to be the disposition, and temper of every one who prays; these are the qualifications of him who prays aright, and to good purpose: And doubtless, whosoever will try (as every one is bound to do) to excite and preserve all these Devout, Pious, and Charitable affections in his Soul, will soon find that Prayer is no meer out-side formal piece of service: But then at the same time he will also find that it is a powerful instrument (where serious and constant) to work him up to this temper, and confirm him in it.

And it ought especially to be considered that the more solemn and publick Prayer is, the more prevalent and successful it will be; not only because it is more for God's Honour and Glory, by the more effectual preserving the belief of his Being and Providence in the World, and as it is a more visible acknowledgment of his Infinite greatness, and inexhaustible goodness, than our more secret and private Devotions; but because the very presence of our Christian Brethren, who utter the sighs and groans of their Hearts, and aspire and pant after God, hath a natural tendency

endency to awaken our drowsy Spirits, and is apt to kindle and inflame our own Devotion, and to raise a firmer Faith and Confidence in God, than our private Petitions can do. God is more especially present in the Assemblies of his Saints, and usually grants the unanimous requests of his Church, more willingly, speedily, and largely, than he does the Prayers of single Persons. And therefore when Prayer is enjoined as an Instrument of Obedience, and a means to a holy life, it is principally to be understood of publick Prayer. Not but that our Closet Devotion is a very acceptable part of Worship, and innumerable happy effects flow from it : But publick Prayer must always have the Preference, and whosoever shall diligently attend upon it, is in a great measure removed from the way of temptation, and by the blessing of God will arrive to an habitual confirmed Goodness.

Mat. 6. 6.

Especially, if according to the directions of Scripture, and the laudable and pious practice of good Men in all Ages, seasonable Fasting be added to Prayer, by such whose Constitution either requires, or can bear it, it will be the more prevalent and efficacious.

Yea, I doubt not, but that a well-composed Form of Prayer, whatever the peevishness of some, and the conceit and perverseness of others, may suggest, is eminently useful, to all the aforesaid pious dispositions and behaviour, and perhaps there is no one thing hath contributed more to the neglect both of

of secret, and family-Prayer, and publick Worship, than the mean and ill opinion- which hath been instill'd into the Minds of Men, concerning set forms of Prayer.

And now from what I have said concerning this great duty of Prayer, we plainly see, whence it is that Men so readily hearken to the temptations of the Flesh and the Devil, and fall into so many gross and scandalous Sins, as we see they do. Is it not because they refuse to arm themselves with Prayer, which is a powerful fence against all kinds of Temptation, and a mighty support, and guard of true Piety, Charity unfeigned, and a pure and unblameable Conversation.

Job. 1. 22.

Jam. 4. 3.

And from hence likewise we learn, why we are not heard in the things which we desire. Some lay the blame upon the Iniquity of the times, in which they live, and others, I fear, are too prone to charge *God foolishly*, Whereas in truth the fault lies at our own doors. Either *we ask amiss, that we may consume it upon our Lusts*, We ask what is unlawful, inexpedient, or hurtful, or else we offend in the manner of our Prayers; We do not Pray with that faith and fervency, humility and resignation, perseverance, charitable affection, and thankfulness, that we ought to do, and then no wonder, we do not meet with that favourable acceptance we hoped for. God is always ready to hear good Men, who ask with Faith and Fervency, according to his Will, but if we are faithless, and indifferent, destitute of true goodness, or cold in our Devotion, whom can we accuse?

cuse? Surely the blame is wholly due to our selves. God is wise, and powerful, and just, and good, and faithful, and true, but we are wanting to our selves, and obstruct the communications of his Love and Goodness.

Thus much may suffice for this great instrumental duty of our Religion, *viz.* Prayer: I proceed to the next, I proposed to consider, *viz.* The due and right use of the Sacraments, which are these two, Baptism and the Supper of our Lord: But before I come to the particular and distinct Explication of them, permit me to premise these few following general observations.

1. As for the word Sacrament, you may please to take notice, that though it is not to be found in the Scripture, yet it is of very ancient Ecclesiastical use, and it does not become any Man to contend about the use of it. The Oath which the *Roman* Soldiers took to their Officers, was called the Military Sacrament: Which word almost from the beginning of Christianity, hath been used to signify those publick federal Rites, whereby Christians oblige and bind themselves to their Religion, promising to *Fight manfully under Christs Banner, against Sin, the World, and the Devil, to their lives end.*

2. From the institution of these Sacraments, and from their number we see something of the divine condescension and goodness, and of the Genius and Spirit of the Christian Religion. Because whilst we are in these Bodies, sensible things are apt to make quick, and deep impressions upon our Minds, especially

cially upon such as are less thoughtful, and knowing, it pleased God to comply with this our weak state, and to apply and sanctifie some external significant Rites, to assure us of his merciful intentions towards us, to put us in mind of our duty, and to be the means of conveying his Grace to us. But then for as much as the Religion of Jesus Christ, is a manly, free, and spiritual Religion, He the wise and good Author of it, was pleased to ordain but very few Rites of this nature, two only, lest by attending too much to outward sensible signs, we should forget and neglect the more spiritual, substantial, and weighty things of it: Or being over-burthened with a multitude of them, we should be in Bondage to a Law of Ordinances, and beggarly Elements, from which it was his purpose to deliver us, by abolishing, cancelling, and nailing them to his Cross.

Gal. 4. 9.
Eph. 2. 15.
Col. 2. 14.

3. In the institution of the Sacraments of our Religion, we have further evidence of God's Grace and Goodness, by comparing them with the Sacraments, and Ceremonies of the *Mosaic Law*. Circumcision, the Sacrament of Initiation into the *Jewish Church*, was a painful and bloody Rite, and some few Nations excepted, generally odious and ridiculous throughout the world. But Baptism, the Sacrament of our Admission into the Church of Christ, is an easie Rite, and used, and approved both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And as to the *Jewish Passover*, which our Lord abolished, and instituted the Eucharist in the room of it, if

we consider it with due attention, we shall find it was a bloody, ceremonious, troublesome, and expensive Rite, and that there is much more Clemency, and Goodness in our Sacrament, whose materials are easily provided, and whose Celebration hath nothing that is burdensome and difficult in it.

4. It is of great use to observe that in Sacramental Expressions, it is very common to give to the Sign, the name of the thing signified; and to attribute the effects, and blessings which the Sacraments, represent and convey, to the outward Elements themselves: Thus Circumcision is called the Covenant, by which is meant, it was the sign, Token, or Seal of the Covenant. So likewise the Paschal Lamb is stiled the Passover, whereas properly speaking, it was only the sign or memorial of the Passover, *i. e.* of God's *passing over the Houses of the Israelites, when he slew the First-born of the Egyptians.* So in the New-Testament, when our Saviour took the Bread, and Blessed, and brake it and said, *This is my Body*, the true meaning is, This Bread, thus taken, blessed and broken, and given to you, represents and signifies my Body, and is the Type, and Memorial of it. And so *this Cup is the New-Testament or Covenant in my Blood*, can mean nothing else, but it is the Sign and Seal of it. And when we are said to be *saved by Baptism*, We understand that it is a sign we are received into the Favour of God, and a mean, and Pledge of our future Salvation.

Gen. 17. 10.

Ex. 12. 27.

Mat. 26. 26.

Tit. 3. 5.

1 Pet. 3. 21.

5. The

5. The next thing I would desire of you to consider is this, that the Operation and Effects of the Sacraments, are not owing to the bare outward use of them, but to the Grace and Blessing of God, and the Moral dispositions, and habits of the Receivers of them. Or if the manner of their Operation be secret and unknown, yet we may assure our selves they do not work, as meer Charms and Medicines, by any inherent virtue of their own. For however this doctrine may tend to create a very high opinion of the Sacraments, yet in its just Consequence, it disposes Men to continue in their Sins, resolving at the point of Death to receive the Sacrament, which they fancy will secure and save them at the last, notwithstanding all the Impiety and Immoralities of their past lives, than which there is scarce a more dangerous and fatal Error. But then,

6. From the natural weakness of the Outward Elements, let no man take occasion profanely to neglect and despise the Sacraments, and think himself above such Ordinances. What tho' Water of it self can do nothing to wash away Sins and purify the Conscience, and what tho' Bread and Wine in their own nature are altogether as unavailable to nourish our Souls to eternal life; yet in vertue of the divine Benediction and Influence, they are mighty and powerful to work all those effects for which they were ordained. The Power of God is not tyed, or limited to any means; he can, and sometimes does work without them, but whensoever he appoints any means, we detract very much both from his Wisdom

and goodness, if we can think, they will prove vain, and ineffectual to the Ends for which he appointed them, tho' we use them as we ought to do. It is our Duty to use the appointed means in due manner and season, and if any thing seem mean and disproportionable to the effects for which they are ordained, Faith must lead us above Sense, and teach us to admire and adore the more abundant manifestation of the divine Wisdom and Goodness, which can work not only by weak, but even by contrary means. Which I do not mention, as if Water, Bread, and Wine, were not proper to represent the Graces and Benefits, which are exhibited and conveyed in the Sacraments, But to keep Men from a Prophane Contempt of the Sacraments, upon the supposed weakness, and insufficiency of the Outward Elements, and to teach them always to look at Gods Grace and Blessing in the Use of them.

7. You must likewise Remember that the Sacraments of Our Religion are of a public nature, they concern the Society and Body of Christians, and therefore are to be administered in a public and solemn manner, in the Church, or presence of the Congregation. Baptism is the Rite of our Admission into the Church of Christ, making us Members of his Body, and unites us to the Society of Christians: And as to the other Sacrament it is a Common Feast, it is the *Communion of the Body of Christ*, and cannot, *i. e.* ought not to be performed, or celebrated, but in Society, with a competent number

Rom. 12. 5.

1 Cor. 12.

13.

Eph. 1. 22.

1 Cor. 10.

15, 16.

K

ber

ber of our Fellow Christians. Not but that either of the Sacraments may be Administred in Private, upon a great and reasonable Cause, or urgent Necessity, and if rightly administred, in such case do not lose their Vertue, the Grace of God not being ty'd either to Number or Place; but where there is no such reasonable Cause or Necessity, the private Administration of them is irregular and indecent, and contrary to the general practice of the Church of God, to which great deference and respect ought to be shewn, for, which is the last thing I shall mention,

8. We may from the institution of the Sacraments see what regard our Saviour had to the innocent and useful Customs of the Church of God. Circumcision, questionless was of Divine Institution. The Admission of Profelytes by Baptism, an Ecclesiastical appointment. Our Saviour abolished the former, and retained the latter, to be the Sacrament of Initiation into his Church, and a *Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*. And it were easie to shew that in the Lords Supper, there is a great Analogy, resemblance and allusion to several Usages and Customs, which the Jews brought into the Paschal Solemnity. But I choose rather to proceed to the consideration of the Sacraments themselves, and I begin with Baptism, and here I shall only consider

1. What we mean by Baptism.
2. What persons are to be Baptized.
3. For what ends and purposes Baptism was ordained; and lastly

4. How

4. How it conduces to confirm us in all Holy Obedience.

I. What we mean by Baptism. Now Baptism is the Solemn Rite of our Admission into the Gospel Covenant, or to the Communion and Privileges of the Church of Christ. It is performed by Ablution or *Math. 28.*

washing with Water in the Name of the Fa- 19.

ther, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,

i. e. By the Authority of the Three Persons in the Blessed Trinity, and with a special Relation to them, as the great Objects of the Christian Faith, in whom we profess we believe, and to whose Worship and Obedience we Devote and Dedicate our selves all the days of our Lives. Now the Sacramental Water may be applied, either by the total Immersion, or Plungeing of the Person Baptized, into the Water, or it may be Poured, or Sprinkled upon him. It must be confessed that the way of Dipping or Diving under the Water, was the most usual way of Baptizing in those hot Eastern Countries, and is most agreeable to our Churches Constitution, and being thus covered with the Baptifmal Waters, is a very lively Representation of our *Burial with Christ in his Death*, and Rising out of them does very aptly signifie our *Rising to newness of Life*, and prefigure and ascertain our future Resurrection. But because it does not evidently appear that the Apostles always confined themselves to this way and manner of Baptizing, but that there are some things to be

Rom. 6. 4.

observed in the New Testament, which may
Math. 12. 7. make the contrary Opinion seem probable,
 especially since God prefers *Mercy before*
Sacrifice, the Church hath for the most part
 contented her self, in these Colder Climates,
 with Sprinkling or pouring Water in a les-
 ser quantity upon the Baptized person : Both
 which ways have their special significancy
 referring to the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and
 the Blood of Christ, The pouring forth the
Isa. 44. 3. Water representing the Effusion of the Gifts
Joh. 7. 38, of the Holy Ghost, those *Rivers of Living*
39. *Water*, which refresh our parched and thirsty
Heb. 12. 24. Souls : And the Sprinkling of Water aptly
1 Joh. 1. 7. enough denotes the *sprinkling of the Blood of*
Christ, which cleanses us from all our Sins.
 But

2. Let us see who the Persons are that are
Mar. 16. to be Baptized. Now I think it is manifest
16. beyond all reasonable Contradiction, that all
AH. 2. 38. persons whatsoever who understand, and Be-
8. 37. lieve the Principles of the Christian Religion,
 and are resolved to live according to it, are
 to be Baptized. The only difficulty is the
 Case of Infants. For because our Saviour
 when he instituted Baptism did command
 his Apostles to *Go, and Teach all Nations,*
Baptizing them in the Name of the Father,
Son, and Holy Ghost, it is supposed that a
 through Instruction must go before Baptism,
 and consequently that none but grown per-
 sons, such as are come to some maturity of
 Years and understanding ought to be admit-
 ted to it, to which I answer

I. That

1. That as to adult or grown persons, it is very requisite and necessary, that there should at least be in them a general knowledge, and perswasion of the Truth, Excellence, and Divinity of the Christian Religion. But whether such a very distinct, explicit, and compleat understanding of every Article and Branch of it, as some contend for, is absolutely necessary, may admit of some Doubt: As without the mention of other places of Scripture appears from the History of the Converted Jaylor: For it cannot be conceived that in the space of an Hour or two, he could fully comprehend all the Doctrines of the Christian Religion: But being convinced that Jesus, whom *Paul* Preach't, was a Teacher come from God, and professing his Resolution to Learn his Doctrine, and govern himself according to the Rules of it, the Apostle *straitway in the same Hour Baptized him and his whole Family*. And if there were any Infants in it, as no Man can prove there was not, they doubtless were Baptized: But however this be, I add

Act. 16. 33.

2. That the Case of Infants is of a different nature and consideration, for though they have neither a general, nor a distinct knowledge, of the nature of the Christian Religion, yet they are not incapable of being initiated into it, nor can Baptism be reasonably deny'd them. I am sure it is highly reasonable, a great act of Charity, and a necessary Duty for their Parents, or others, in whose Power they are, to take

1 Sam. I,
28.

due care for their future instruction in the Christian Faith, and I know no good reason, why their solemn promise and engagement so to do, as soon as they shall be capable of it, should not be accepted to their present behoof and Benefit: Especially if it be considered that Infants are capable of other very great and principal ends of Baptism. Who can say that they are not capable of the Mercy, Blessings and Privileges of the Gospel; or that they cannot be brought under the Obligation of it? May not their Parents Dedicate them to the Service of God, in such manner as to oblige them to serve him all the days of their Lives? And may not the Children themselves be accepted of God, and reap the happy Fruits of such Dedication? And if they may be Dedicated to him at all, why not by Baptism, the only public Rite of Dedication to him? It is not denied but that Parents and Guardians may contract in behalf of their Children and Minors, and whatsoever contract they make in their behalf, provided it be for the good of the Children, is in equitable construction their own act, and they stand obliged when they come of Age, to make it good. And as they may do this, so they are not usually negligent to invest, or instate them in all the Rights, Privileges, and Immunities they can. But are they obliged, or have they a power only to take care of their Temporal concerns, and none at all to secure their Everlasting advantage, by putting them early into the way of Salvation? Or can it become

become them to be cautious and diligent about their Worldly Estate, and remiss and careless, about their Spiritual Priviledges, which are of Infinite and eternal concern? To say the truth, whosoever shall deny the public Admission of Infants, into the Gospel Covenant (and what other public appointed Rite is there of admission into it but by Baptism?) seems to detract both from the Perfection, and the Grace of the Gospel: Making it a less comprehensive, and less merciful Dispensation than that of *Moses*, which took care of Infants as well as grown persons, receiving them into the Priviledges, and bringing them under the Obligation of that Covenant. But is God the God of the *Jewish* Children alone? Is he not also of the Christian? Did the Law of *Moses* provide for Infants? And can Jesus Christ, *who was faithful in all his house as a Son*, overlook or despise them? Upon this Supposition the Children of Christians are in a worse condition than the Children of the *Jews* were, in a worse state than the Children of the Profelytes who were Baptized, and thereby admitted into the *Jewish* Church together with their Parents, though they understood as little of the *Jewish*, as our Children can possibly do of the Christian Religion. Children at least seem by this Doctrine to be losers by the Gospel; and yet it is very evident that according to its gracious intention, all persons whatsoever should be great gainers by it. In fine, whosoever

Heb. 3. 5, 6.

shall consider that the Apostle hath very clearly affirmed that the Children of Believers *are Holy*, i. e. have a right to be made holy, separate to God, or to be Christians, and that our Saviour no where forbid Infant Baptism, encouraged the bringing Infants to him, and laid his Hands on them, and Blessed them, and declared that the Kingdom of Heaven belonged to them, and elsewhere Taught that *he who believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, and that *unless a man be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, and commanded the Apostles to *Baptize all nations in his name*, and that the Apostles Baptized multitudes at a time, pursuant to their Commission, (among whom probably there might be some Infants) I say whosoever shall lay all these things together, and consider that the general practice of the Church, which is the best Interpreter of Scripture in such doubtful cases, hath in all succeeding Ages, at least approved, if not enjoined, Infant Baptism, must think the determination of our own Church highly Reasonable and Pious, which Teaches that *the Baptism of Young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the Institution of Christ*. And though I dare not say, that the meer Privation or want of Baptism, is Damnable, yet it is certain, that the wilful neglect and contempt of it is extremely dangerous; and therefore however the Children, which are innocent, may escape, yet I fear, it will in such case, go very hard with the Parents,

1 Cor. 7. 14.

Matth. 19. 13.

Mar. 16. 16.

Job. 3. 5.

Math. 28. 19.

Act. 2. 41.

Art. 27.

Parents, or those who have the Care of them: And if any Children, through their Parents and Guardians neglect, have wanted the great Priviledge of Baptism in their Infancy, they are bound, when they come to Years of Discretion, and are competently instructed in the Christian Doctrine, to present themselves to a lawful Minister, to be Baptized by him, and to receive it with all Solemnity and Reverence, Joy and Thankfulness: I know very well how difficultly such Persons are brought to Baptism, and how many Shifts and Excuses they have, either wholly to forbear, or delay it. Excessive Fondness for the Vanities and sinful Pleasures of this Life, (from which Baptism debarrs them) Multiplicity of Business, or present Ignorance, or the danger of relapsing into Sin after it, fear of disobliging some Relations or Friends, or want of the Company of others to be Witnesses of it, or the Rareness of the thing it self, and such like Pretences are made, which oftentimes are Occasions why such Persons are never Baptized, to the great Hazard of their Souls, which ought to be a Warning to Parents and all Persons concerned, to be very careful and cautious in this Matter, lest they expose their Children to these and such like Temptations, and become accessory to their eternal Ruine. It may not be in their Power to prevail with them, to be Baptized in their riper Years, when they would have them be Baptized, and who knows
how

how fatal the Want of it, if accompany'd with Contempt, may prove!

As for such, who by their Parents pious Care, have been Baptized in their Infancy, and early pre-engaged to a Christian Holy Life, it is, at least, highly expedient, that they, as soon as they are competently instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, be presented to the Bishop, and solemnly renew their Baptismal Vow, and be confirmed by him. ' If such Persons ' were brought to the Bishop, and in the ' presence of God and the Congregation, did ' renew the solemn Vow and Promise which ' was made in their Names at their Baptism, ' and in their own Persons ratify and confirm the same, acknowledging themselves ' bound to believe and do those things which ' their God-fathers and God-mothers [Parents or others] then undertook for them, ' and joined in the solemn Prayers of the ' Church, and received the Bishop's solemn ' Benediction, it would very much tend to their Encrease and Establishment in true Virtue and Goodness; and it would be for the Honour of the Church, shewing that the Members of it, are Christians, by their own Choice and Approbation, as well as by their Parents or others, solemn Dedication.

I am heartily sorry there should have been any eager Dispute concerning *Infant-Baptism*, where there seems so little Reason for it: Controversy is beside the Design of these Papers; but this Case falling so directly in my way, I was unwilling wholly to pass it
by.

by. But they who desire farther Satisfaction, may consult several of our own Divines, who have writ upon this Subject with great Piety and Judgment.

3. Let us now consider for what End or Purposes Baptism was ordained. Now, under this Head it may be considered either with reference to God or our selves. In respect of God, it was ordained to be a Sign and Seal, an Earnest or Pledge of his merciful and gracious Intentions, to pardon our Sins, regenerate us by his Word and Spirit, and make us Partakers of eternal Life through Jesus Christ, and to be a means of conveying his Grace to us. In regard of our selves, it was instituted, as our Church speaks, *not only for a Sign of Profession and Mark of Difference whereby Christian Men are discerned from others, that be not Christ-ned*, but also to be a solemn Bond and Engagement upon us to Repentance, Faith and new Obedience; or in the words of the *Church-Catechism*, to oblige us to *renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pomp and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh; to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, and to keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our Lives.* All which Blessings and Benefits promised on God's part, and Conditions or Duties, required on our part, have already been so distinctly and fully considered, that I need not here add any thing farther concerning them;

them ; and therefore I proceed to the last thing, *viz.*

4. To shew how our Baptism conduces to engage us to, and nourish and confirm us in all holy Obedience. And it hath a mighty Influence in a Moral Consideration, by way of Argument and Motive, to excite and quicken to it. For by Baptism we are admitted into the Family and Household of God, are *made his Children, Members of Christ, and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven.* But yet it does not so far instate and confirm us in all these inestimable Blessings and Priviledges, as to put us into an absolute Incapacity of falling from them. For though we have been purified with the Laver of Regeneration, yet if we again run into the Snare of the Devil, and *entangle our selves in the Pollution of the World through Lust,* we forfeit all our Right and Title to them ; and return to our former Enmity again. And what Consideration can more powerfully engage us than this, to due Care and Watchfulness over our selves ? When at any time the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, combine against us, and either craftily entice, or more openly assault us, should we not thus reason with our selves ? *We have chosen the Lord to be our God,* and he hath received us to his Favour and Love, and how can we join or take part with his Enemies ?

2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. What Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness ? and what Communion hath Light with Darkness ? and what Concord hath Christ with Belial ? and how can we
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Tit. 3. 5.

take the Members of Christ, and make them the Members of a Harlot? God forbid. Can we renounce all that Interest which our Baptism hath given us in the Great Creator and Governor of the World? Had we rather worship and serve the Devil, our most deadly Enemy, than the God who made us, and is our greatest Friend and best Benefactor? Can we deny the Lord that bought us, and forfeit our Title to all the Benefits of his meritorious Performances? Can we part with the Gift of the Holy Spirit, who alone can direct, sanctify and govern our Hearts and Lives? Can we contentedly be excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven? or are we willing to be Children of Wrath, and Fire-brands of Hell? No; far be such Thoughts from us, our Hearts tremble at the mention of them: And yet this must be the sad Case, if we do not sincerely endeavour to make good our Baptismal Vow. What Consideration can be more apt than this, to work both upon our Hopes and Fears? Besides, when any of us are tempted to any evil Designs or sinful Practices, let us immediately return this Answer: We are not our own; we are already devoted to God; He hath taken Possession of us, and we are his, and we can never alienate our selves from him. We are separate and holy to the Lord: And how can we do so foolishly and wickedly as to defecrate, unhallow, or profane our selves again? We cannot do it without wilfully incurring the Guilt of the most heinous and detestable Treachery,

Matth. 28. 20.

Treachery, Injustice and Sacrilege : We cannot do it without breaking the most solemn Vow, and robbing God himself ; and who can do either and be innocent or safe ? Who can do either without exposing himself to the sad Effects of a most terrible Displeasure and Vengeance ? Which Consideration not only awakens our Fears, but works also upon Ingenuity, Gratitude, and Love ; and if we have the least spark of them left in our Hearts, we shall never consent to any such Temptations, but strive with all our might to do all things which our Lord hath commanded us : And then our Baptism verily will be the true Baptism, and profit to our Salvation : But if having been Baptized into the Name of Christ, we do not strive to be like him, it will be more tolerable for Heathens and Infidels in the day of Judgment, than for us : If Men would think and reflect upon their Baptismal Vow, they would soon find the happy Effect of such Reflections. The oftner we meditate upon the Blessings and Duties of our Baptism, the better : But if only during the Celebration of it in our publick Religious Assemblies, we would behave our selves with Decency and Reverence, and when we see a Child Baptized, would heartily join in the Prayers and Praises of the Congregation, and call to mind that we our selves were once Baptized, and are still under the Obligation of our Baptism, and would remember our frequent Neglects and Violations of this our Vow, and humble our Souls for them, and resolve to

to do better for the time to come, and bless God where we find, through his Grace, we have been in some measure and degree faithful to it; doubtless we should find great Advantage by such Reflection and Practice; it would very much tend to *build us up in our holy Faith*, and render us more watchful, diligent and obedient, and further the Salvation of our Souls.

But because we are too apt to forget our Baptismal Vow, it pleased our Blessed Saviour to institute another Sacrament, to assure us of God's good Will and gracious Intentions towards us, and to put us in mind of our Duty, and confirm us in the Practice of it. And this is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, of which I will now treat as briefly and plainly as I can. And,

1. I will lay the words of the Institution before you, from which you will see your Obligation to receive this Sacrament.

2. I will shew the Perpetuity of the Institution, or that it was our Saviour's Purpose, that the Use of this Sacrament should be kept up or continued in his Church to the end of the World. And then,

3. That it is our Duty to receive it often, as often as any fit opportunity is offered.

4. I will consider the End of its Institution, and that both as it respects God and our selves, and shew that it is a federal or covenanting Rite, wherein God, by outward visible Signs, promises, exhibits and
conveys

conveys the Blessings of the new Covenant, under certain Conditions which he requires of us, and we, on our part, most heartily accept and promise, profess and solemnly engage to perform, with all due Care and Faithfulness to our Power.

5. *Lastly*, I will endeavour to shew, that the serious and frequent receiving of this Sacrament, is as well a mighty Help and Instrument of true Piety and sincere and steadfast Obedience, as a solemn and sacred Bond or Obligation to it.

I have not mentioned the Duties preparative to it, which are sincere Repentance, Faith, and new Obedience, because they have been all along so fully consider'd, that I need not again explain, or reinforce them upon you. And therefore according to the Method laid down :

1. I will lay before you the words of the Institution, from which you will see your Obligation to receive this Sacrament. Now, *St. Matthew* tells us, That at the end or close of the Passover, which Jesus had been eating with his Disciples, *he took Bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body. And he took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* On which Account *St. Luke* and *St. Paul* add these remarkable words, *Do this in Remembrance of me.* From which Account it evidently appears, that our blessed

Mat. 26. 26.

Luke 22. 19.

1 Cor. 11. 25.

fed Saviour having separated Bread and Wine, by Prayer and Thanksgiving, to a holy Use, brake the Bread, and took the Cup, and delivered both the Bread and Wine to his Disciples, as a visible Sign and Representation of his Body, which was shortly to be broken, and his Blood shed upon the Cross for the Purchase and Confirmation of the new Covenant, and the Disciples did all of them actually partake of the Bread and Wine, and were commanded to imitate our Saviour in what he had then done. For these words, *Do this in Remembrance of me,* (especially compared with other places of the *New Testament*) can imply nothing less, than that they should do hereafter as they had seen him do now. As he had taken Bread, given thanks, blessed, brake and delivered it to them; so they, when he was gone to his Father, should take Bread, give thanks, bless and break, and deliver it to the Faithful, for a Memorial of him. And the like is to be said for the Cup. The words are as direct, express and formal a Command, to take, eat, drink in Remembrance of Christ, as can well be contrived, and nothing can evade or destroy the Obligation of it, but what will equally discharge us from any other positive Precept. And to argue the Case a little. Is the Institution and Command clear and express, (as certainly it is) how dare we wilfully neglect or disobey it? We would take it very ill to be thought the Enemies of Christ; and yet, if we wilfully break this Command, it

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John 15. 14.

is very hard to see how we can be accounted his Friends, since he himself hath told us, that we are *then his Friends, if we do whatsoever he commands us.* Are we his Friends if we refuse so easy and gentle a Precept? So much for the Manifestation of the Honour of his Name, which so effectually shews forth his Power with God, and proclaims the Wonders of his Grace and Goodness towards Men? Are we his Friends if we will not attend to his dying Words, if we will not fulfill his last Will and Testament, which he sealed with his Blood for our present and everlasting Welfare? How can we in such case excuse ourselves from the Guilt of the highest dissimulation and basest Ingratitude?

I know very well some Excuses are made for the neglect of it, but the Weakness of them all hath been so clearly and fully discover'd, that I fear Hypocrisy and Wickedness lies at the bottom of them all. Men are loath to bind themselves to a strict Holy Life, have some Secular Interest to promote, some irregular Passion or other to gratify, some corrupt Design to be promoted in an ill way, which is the true Reason (if they would speak out) of their refusing to partake of this Sacrament.

1 Cor. 11. 27.

If there be any Excuse which seems plausible, perhaps it is that which is taken from the Danger of unworthy receiving, grounded upon the Case of the *Corinthians, who eat and drank Judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's Body.* But this Pretence

tence hath been sufficiently confuted by others, and I shall only observe these two things concerning it.

1. Our People, at least as far as hath fallen under my Observation, through the pious Care of our Church, and the Instruction and Example of her Ministers, is in no great danger of falling into the Sin and Punishment of the *Corinthians*. We do truly discern the Lord's Body, making a Distinction between it and our common Meals, I never observ'd any Irreverence or scandalous Rudeness during the Celebration of it. There is certainly a very great appearance of Seriousness and Devotion among us, and therefore our Case is not the same with that of the *Corinthians*, and our whole Communion Office is so admirably fitted to excite pious Affection and Behaviour, that in a great measure it secures from the Danger of their Sin and Punishment. But,

2. I take notice likewise of the great Partiality of this Excuse. They who make it, for the most part, consider the Danger of unworthy receiving, but seldom or never reflect upon the Danger of not receiving. They are very scrupulous concerning the manner of performing this Duty, (and far be it from me to encourage any to come to it with impenitent and unbelieving Hearts, or to behave themselves indecently at it) but have little or no sense or dread of the Evil and Hazard of the non-performance or neglect of it. Whereas if they were sincere and constant to themselves, they would fear

on both sides, and sincerely resolve to amend what is amiss, and occasions their Fears, that so they might partake of it with Peace and Comfort.

But because this Pretence, when thoroughly examined, is found weak and insufficient, others, to shew how averse they are to this Duty, will not stick to suggest, that this Sacrament was only a Temporary Institution, and concerned only the Apostles, and that there lies no Obligation upon Christians in succeeding Ages, to continue the Use of it: which leads me to

2. Shew the Perpetuity of the Institution, or that it was our Saviour's Intention, that the Use of this Sacrament should be kept up and continued in the Church for a Memorial of him, to the Worlds end. Now, not to say that there appears no Reason at all for a Temporary Memorial only, nor yet to insinuate, that we, in these latter Ages of the World, are as much obliged publickly to commemorate the Death and Passion of our Saviour, as the Christians of the first Ages were, nor yet to mention that we have as great, if not greater, need of visible Signs to assure us of the Grace of God, and apply it to us, as they had, no, nor yet to dispute whether the Perpetuity of the Institution can be absolutely concluded, from the meer Force of those Words, *Do this in Remembrance of me*; (all which Considerations nevertheless are of great weight and moment, to satisfy ingenuous and unprejudic'd Minds.) That which I shall chiefly insist upon

upon, is the words of St. Paul, and the general Practice of the Christians of the first, and some succeeding Ages in the Church. The words of St. Paul are clear and full, *As often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye shew the Lord's Death, i. e. make a solemn Publication of it till he come, i. e. till his second coming, to Judgment, which will be at the end of the World.* Our Saviour himself, after his Ascension into Heaven, when he chose St. Paul to be an Apostle, (who certainly was not present at the first Celebration of it) immediately revealed the Institution of this Sacrament, the whole Sacramental Rite and Actions, to him, and commanded him to do according to his Appointment, and the Apostle did as he was commanded, and pleads our Saviour's Authority for what he did, saying, *he received it from the Lord:* It was no Device or Invention of his own: And afterwards, takes a great deal of Pains to direct the *Corinthians*, concerning the due Celebration of it; charging them to do it with Decency and Reverence, and due Preparation of Heart, making a distinction between it and their common Meals, least, as some of them had already done, they should draw Diseases, and temporal Death, upon themselves. Now, what need of an immediate Revelation from Heaven to a new Apostle, why such a very particular Care and Caution about it, if it were a thing of small Concern, or a meer temporary Appointment, whose Obligation and Use would very soon
L. 3 expire?

Joh. 3. 16.
Isa. 53. 10.

Act. 2. 42.

expire? No, all these things make it very plain to the Teachable and Ingenuous, (and what is plain to those that are not so?) that this Sacrament is a very principal Part of the Christian Worship. It is a solemn Sacrifice of Thanksgiving and Prayer, implying a grateful Acknowledgment of God's infinite Love in giving his Son to die for us, and a solemn Publication of the marvellous and incomprehensible Love of the Son, in *pouring out his Soul an Offering for Sin*: And it is a solemn Representation of all his meritorious Performances, to his Father, together with an earnest Supplication to him, that he would accept, and bless us, and all the Members of his Church, in Virtue of his precious Blood, wherewith he redeemed us. And thus to do, is to *shew forth the Lord's Death*, and thus Christians are obliged to shew it forth to the end of the World. And howsoever in our degenerate times we think and do otherwise, yet the Christians of the first Age, (who best understood our Saviour's Intention in the Institution of this Sacrament) and whose Love to him was sincere, vigorous and inflamed, accounted and used it as a principal part of their standing publick Worship. They continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread and Prayer: And the Christian Service is expressed by breaking of Bread; for it is said, *upon the first day of the Week, when the Disciples met together to break Bread, Paul preached to them.* Which places clearly intimate

imate, that as often as the Disciples met for publick Worship, they remembred our Lord by receiving this Sacrament, according to his Appointment. It was, if not a part of their daily, yet at least, a constant part of their Lord's-day Service. Now, whosoever shall affirm, that this Sacrament is but a temporary Appointment, must either directly contradict the Apostle, who declares it a Memorial of Christ's Death till he come to Judgment, or suppose that the Apostles and first Christians mis-understood our Saviour's Intention, or acted contrary to it; both which are absurd, impudent and wicked Assertions, and manifestly discover a bad Cause.

But if it be granted, (as I think I have proved) that the Institution is plain, and the Obligation perpetual, and can never cease, yet such is Mens Aversness to this Duty, (which yet is in the most strict and proper Sense, a Christian Duty, having a peculiar Reference to our Saviour, and being a singular Instance of Obedience, Honour and Love to him) and so much afraid are they of engaging themselves too strictly to a holy Life, that still they will find out something or other to object, if not as to the total Neglect of it, yet as to the Frequency of Communicating: Some thinking they have fully discharged their Duty if they receive it once a Year, though they have many returns of it in the Year, and others putting it off to a Death-bed, when they are at their last Gasps, and just entering up-

on their eternal State. Now, to satisfy such as these, I am to shew,

3. That it is our Duty to receive this Sacrament often, as often as a fit opportunity is offered. And here it must be confess'd, that the Scripture hath no where said in express words, either how often the Ministers of Christ are bound to consecrate, or the People to partake of this Sacrament. Because it was instituted at the end of the Jewish Passover, and succeeds in the room of it. Some have collected, that it is only necessarily to be repeated upon some one great Festival Solemnity in the Year, such as the Anniversary Lord's-day, or the Yearly Day of his Resurrection. But others infer, I think, with greater Judgment and Piety, that it is very probable, if this only had been our Saviour's Intention, he would have given some Precept or clear Intimation concerning it, as the Jews had concerning the time of their Passover: But he having prescribed no set determinate time at all, in which we ought to communicate, we should rather look upon this Institution as a standing, constant part of our religious Worship, at least that it is a Defect, to omit it upon the Lord's-day. Which Inference is the more probable, if not evidently certain, from the Practice of the Apostles and first Christians, who communicated, as I before observ'd, in this Sacrament, in all their publick religious Worship. And the Churches of God for some Ages after, agreed in the same Practice, and there were Cannons and Constitu-

Constitutions made, threatening Excommunication to any of the Faithful who came to Church to hear the holy Scriptures, but went away without partaking of the Lord's Supper. Yea, many of the ancient Fathers of the Church look'd upon the Sacramental Bread as a part of that daily Bread we ask in the Lord's-Prayer, [which, whether it be so or no, is not a proper place to dispute.] Yet this, together with the other Considerations I have offered, are of great force, to shew the Necessity of frequent Communicating. For who, as I said, can imagine that the Apostles and first Christians should either be ignorant of our Saviour's Meaning, or mis-understand, or act contrary to it? But if this should be thought a meer Excess of Devotion, and these early Followers of our Saviour *were righteous over-much*, (as what is there that Impiety, Indifference in Religion, and Hypocrisy will not suggest :) Yet the words of St. Paul, who hath told us, *as often as we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we shew forth the Lord's Death till he come*, are not to be evaded. Those words *As Oft*, certainly imply frequent Communion, and condemn the sloathful, and profane, and scandalous Neglect of our degenerate times.

And methinks if we did but consider how very unmindful we are of our Baptifmal Covenant, and how often we break it, and thereby expose our selves to the Wrath of God, and provoke the Holy Spirit to withdraw his Assistance from us, and unless God
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Eph. 4. 30.
Rom. 8. 11.

John 6. 34.
Psa. 42. 1.

be merciful to us, forfeit and lose our Title to eternal Life; we should gladly embrace every happy opportunity of renewing our Baptifmal Vow, and reconciling our selves to God, and invite the Return and continued Help of his good Spirit, whereby we are sealed to the Great Day of Redemption, and have in our selves the Earnest and Pledge of a blessed Immortality: I say, if we would duly consider these things, and let them sink into our Hearts, we should cry out, *Lord, evermore give us this Bread.* We should with the same Ardour and Vehemence that the Heart pants after the Water-brooks, hunger and thirst after the Bread of Life, and the Cup of Blessing, the due Participation whereof is the chief outward visible Means of making up the Breach between God and us, and of our Growth and Encrease in true Piety and Goodness. For which is the next thing I am to consider and explain

Mat. 26. 28.

Rev. 13. 8.

4. The general End of this Sacrament, being to remember our Saviour Christ, all that he hath done and suffered for us, it must be considered not as a bare Memorial of him, but as a federal or covenanting Rite. Our Saviour expressly said, that this solemn giving and receiving of Bread and Wine is the new Testament in his Blood, *i. e.* this Action is a Covenant between God and Man, made in the *Blood of the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*: and implies a Declaration on God's part, that he will perform all that he hath promised in

in Christ, and a solemn Profession or Vow on our part, that we will fulfil all that he requires of us, in order to our partaking of his Promises. The giving and receiving of Bread and Wine exhibits and conveys the Blessings of the new Covenant to the worthy Receivers, as much as Lands and Inheritances are convey'd and made over by Deeds and Writings sign'd and seal'd for that purpose. *The Covenant of God is sure,* he will not fail of any good thing which he hath promised, the only fear is on our part, but if we are sincere and honest, and our Consciences do not condemn us, we may have Confidence towards God, and draw near him with Assurance of his Readiness to pardon us, and bestow eternal Life upon us.

1 John 3. 21.
Heb. 10. 20.

If you ask what the Blessings promised, and what the Conditions required are, I answer, they are no other than those which God promised and we vow'd at our Baptism, God promises the Pardon of Sin, the Gift of the Spirit, and eternal Life, and we vow Repentance, Faith and new Obedience. Tho' here they may admit of a something different Consideration; for as I just now observed, we too often break our Baptismal Vow, whereby we offend God, grieve his holy Spirit, and wound our Souls: This Sacrament therefore may be considered as a Means appointed to repair the Ruines which the Fraud of the Devil and our own carnal Will and Affections, have at any time made in our Souls, either as to our Safety or Comfort.

1 Cor. 10. 13.
Eph. 4. 15.

fort. For notwithstanding the Violation of our first deliberate and solemn Engagement, upon our serious and hearty Repentance, and sincere and publick Protestation of greater Fidelity for the time to come, our blessed Lord still considers us as Children of his Father, and Members of his Body, and gives us leave to come to his Table, and renew our Covenant with him, wherein we are again offered the same Blessings and Privileges, in which we were invested at our Baptism, together with an additional Supply, of farther Grace and Assistance, to unite us more closely to himself (and to one another also) by fresh and larger Communications of his Spirit, into which, as the Apostle speaks, *being made to drink*, and being under the Influence of it, and enlivened and actuated by it, we derive Strength and Nourishment from him, *our Head, growing up into him in all things, till we become perfect Men in Christ Jesus.*

5. Lastly, I am to shew that the serious, devout, and frequent Receiving this Holy Sacrament, is not only a Sacred or Solemn Bond or Obligation, but a very special and powerful Instrument of true Piety, and sincere and stedfast Obedience.

For in the Sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, of which this Sacrament is a very lively Representation and Memorial, we have the most dreadful and astonishing declaration of the infinite Holiness and Justice of God: We see how tender he is of the honour of these glorious Attributes, what a terrible

terrible Enemy he is to Sin, and how inflexible and impartial in his proceedings against it, without any Respect of Persons. If the Son of God himself, who was infinitely Dear to his Father, being Substituted in our place, and becoming our Surety, was punished in so Severe a manner, how can we forbear to Fear and Tremble before God! *If these* Luke 23. 31. *things be done in the Green Tree, what will be done in the Dry!* If he who was Holy, Harmless, Undeiled and without Rebuke, when he bore our Sins in his body, felt such unknown and unconceivable anguish in his Soul, and such exquisite, inexpressible Torments in his Body, what will become of a wilful, hardened and incorrigible Sinner! How can such a one escape! it is impossible *1 Pet. 2. 24.* for him to avoid the heaviest Punishment. And what consideration can more effectually excite to care and vigilance over our selves, least we come into condemnation?

And as in our Saviours Sufferings, we clearly behold the Justice and Holiness of the Divine Nature, so likewise the infinite Evil of Sin is evidently set before us. That certainly must be intolerably odious to God, and injurious to Men, which kindles so fierce an indignation and displeasure against it, and pulls down such a terrible Vengeance upon the Guilty. How should our hearts rise against it, how should we hate, abhor, and forsake it? Can we behold our greatest Friend and Benefactor, our Redeemer and Saviour the Lord of Life and Glory, Sweating, Bleeding, Fainting, and Dying under the

the weight of it, and nevertheless give any entertainment to it in our hearts, or approve, or commit it? O let us rather look upon our Sins as the Murderers of the Son of God, and Crucify them in our selves, because they Crucified him. I am sure, as this was one end of our Saviours Sufferings, so the deep and serious, and frequent Meditation upon them, hath a mighty tendency, and a kind of a commanding force and energy, to engage, and constrain us to forsake them. He must be an insensible and hardened Wretch indeed, who can Sin on without shame or remorse, whilst he beholds these dismal and amazing effects of Sin.

But then as in this Sacrament, which is a Solemn Memorial and Representation of our Saviours Sufferings, we see the Justice and Holiness of God, and the great evil of Sin, so likewise we have the most marvelous and gracious declaration, and proof, of the infinite Love of God, and our Saviour towards us, which naturally excites and strengthens Gratitude, Love and Faith. For can we when we Celebrate this Sacrament, consider that God gave his Son, and that the Son of God gave himself a Ransom for us, and even now in a Mystery by his Minister offers us the Benefits of his Sacrifice; I say can we consider these things, and at the same time forget to Bless and Praise, and Magnifie and Proclaim their Love, and thank them for it, and *Love them* again above all things, *with all our heart, and*
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with all our soul, and with all our strength, and hope and trust in them for ever. If God so loved us as to give his Son for our Salvation, *how shall he not together with him* Rom. 8. 31. *freely give us all things.* If the Son so loved us, as to purchase us with his own Blood, will he suffer any to pluck us out of his hand, will he not perfect the work of his Grace in us, and make us partakers of Eternal Life? Our Hearts must be stupid and brutish, and harder than the Neather Millstone, if they are unsensible of such Love, and do not return love for Love. And we must be very Faint-hearted, and Unbelievers indeed, if we do not repose our confidence in God and Christ, who have done so great things for us.

And as the Celebration of this Mystery hath a tendency to excite these Pious Affections towards God, so likewise it is powerfully efficacious to work suitable Affection and Behaviour towards all our Brethren; for when we consider that in this Sacrament our Blessed Lord offers himself, the Benefits of his Holy Life, and Meritorious Death and Passion to all our Fellow Christians, who are faithful to him, as well as to our selves, without difference or distinction, can we entertain any high Conceit of our selves, or any mean opinion of any true Christian? How can we behave our selves disdainfully or contemptuously towards the very meanest of them? Nay, how can we choose but love them with the most sincere and fervent Love? Should we not reason thus within
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our selves? God himself hath loved them: Our blessed Saviour, the Son of God, hath loved them with the most real and incomprehensible Love; and ought not we to value and love those who are thus beloved of the Father and the Son? Ought we not to love them who are called to the same Privileges, entertained at the same Table, and fed with the same Spiritual and Celestial Food that we our selves are? *Did we not go to the House of God as Friends*, and by eating the same Bread, and drinking the same Cup, at the same Table profess our Friendship with God, and with all the World, and especially to the Household of Faith, being incorporated into the same mystical Body, of which Christ is the Head, and Members one of another? The natural Result of such Consideration is this, since these things are so, we will endeavour, as is our bounden-Duty, to maintain mutual Affection, and sincere and fervent Love, and walk in it to our Lives end. And all that War and Blood-shed, Rapine and Violence, Faction and Animosity, Strife and Contention, in publick Societies and private Families, is perhaps more owing to the neglect of frequent Communion, than many in the World imagine: For if Men were careful in this Respect, and the Importance of Communicating duly considered, they could scarce hate and revile, *bite and devour one another, as they now do*: But would be of one Heart, and of one Soul, and *walk in Love even as Christ also hath loved us, and given*

Eph. 5. 2.

given himself an Offering and a Sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling Savour. Yea, upon Supposition of any Breach of Friendship, (whether upon a real or pretended Cause) the receiving this Sacrament, is a means to dispose us to Reconciliation, and to tye us in a more firm and indissoluble Bond of Love. For when we draw near to our Lord's Table, in hopes of having the Remission of our Sins exhibited, ratified and sealed to us in the Blood of Christ, with what Heart, or with what Face can we retain any Rancor, Malice or Ill-will towards any of our Brethren? How can we desire or expect the Forgiveness of those ten thousand Talents, in which we stand indebted to God, if we neglect or refuse to forgive our Brother the hundred Pence which he *Mat. 18. 26.* owes us? When we consider the glorious Patterns which God and Christ have set us, and profess that it is our Glory and Perfection to be Imitators of them; this is a very powerful Motive and Argument to us to strive to resemble them in such Perfections. There is scarce any Grace or Vertue which this Sacrament hath not a Tendency to excite, cherish and confirm in us; and I might be large upon this Head. But because others have treated upon it with greater Advantage than I can do, and because what I have said is sufficient to shew, that the receiving of this Sacrament is a great instrumental Duty of our Religion, tending mightily to the encrease of Piety, Charity and Obedience, I will conclude this Head with

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those remarkable and weighty words, of a most Reverend and Excellent Prelate of our own Church, who affectionately tells us, ' That we in vain bemoan the Decay of our ' Graces, and our slow Progress and Improvement in Christianity, whilst we wilfully despise the best Means of our Growth ' in Goodness. Well do we deserve that ' God should send Leanness into our Souls, ' and make them to consume and pine away, ' in perpetual Doubting and Trouble, if ' when God himself does spread so bountiful a Table for us, and set before us the ' Bread of Life, we will not come, and feed ' upon it, with Joy and Thankfulness.

Thus have I, with as much Brevity and Plainness as I could, given you the Summ and Substance of the Christian Religion, in the Belief and Practice of which alone we, to whom it is clearly revealed, can obtain Salvation: And now, to make what I have written the more useful to serve the great Ends of Piety and Vertue, I shall only recommend these few following Particulars to your serious Consideration.

1. You plainly see, that the Religion which I have been explaining and pressing upon you, is a Religion worthy of God to reveal, agreeable to the best Reason of Mankind, and subservient to our present as well as future Happiness, and therefore let every Man take heed of making any Alteration in it, or of thinking to commute with God, by the Belief or Practice of something else instead

stead of it, let him adhere to this alone as necessary and abundantly sufficient to his Salvation. There are, and always have been some, who have been either so weak and injudicious, or so conceited and hypocritical, as to think they could not be religious and holy enough, unless they abstained from something more than was forbid, or did something above what was expressly commanded, or else that God would accept of something else in lieu of what he had commanded. And therefore some, as a Mark of extraordinary Temperance, have utterly prohibited the Use of Marriage, Meat and Wine; and such were those of whom the Apostle speaks, who cry'd out, *Touch not, taste not, handle not.* And because Mortification, and Self-denial, Patience, Humility and Meekness, and destroying the Body of Sin, are Matters of some Difficulty, and call for Care and Diligence, and will put Men to some Trouble. Others have contented themselves with the Shadows of these Graces, setting up their own Inventions instead of them. Some have pleased themselves with rolling in the Dust, and wallowing in the Mire, with uncouth Tremblings, antic Gestures, distinguishing Habits, and peculiar Forms of Speech. Others have deluded their Souls with a rigid Observation of Days, external Sprinklings and Purifications, hair Shirts, tatter'd Apparel, tedious Pilgrimages, unnatural Whippings, and other fond Inventions and affected Austerities, foolishly imagining, that

Col. 2. 21.

there is much of Piety in these little things, (to say no worse of them) and that God is as well pleased with them, as they themselves are. But, alas! what is there of the Spirit of Christianity in these things? This is a counterfeit and spurious Religion, and not the Religion of Jesus Christ. It is not either the Righteousness which God hath commanded, or which he will accept. These things are no better than *Hay, Wood and Stubble*, which will not endure the Fire of the Great Day: There is no real Moral worth in them, nor do they improve Men as to a State of Holiness. He must think meanly of God, who can suppose he hath any great value for them, and think unworthily of the Religion, which he hath taught by his Son, which *is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost, Justice, Mercy, and the Love of God.* And whosoever, in these great Moral Duties, *serves Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men*, and therefore let us adhere to these things, with a stedfast Resolution and unshaken Constancy. But these are not the only Men who deceive themselves in the Point of Religion; for there are others, who despise and deride this sort of Superstition, who yet are deluded with the Form and Shadow of Godliness. Some think, that Confession of their Sins, especially if it be to a Priest, should save them. But Confession alone is no Security: *He only that confesseth and forsaketh his Sin, shall find Mercy.*

Rom. 14. 17, 18

Prov. 28. 13.

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Some please themselves with their Knowledge, because they understand more than others, therefore it shall go well with them: But these likewise build upon the Sand, Practice must be joined with Knowledge, or else *we know nothing as we ought to do. If we know these things, happy are we if we do them.* But he that saith, he knoweth God *John 13. 17.* and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him.

Some glory in external Priviledges, in their Baptism, and the Purity of the Church of which they are Members. And these are great Advantages, but of themselves will not procure Salvation. The Corporal Washing alone will not save, there must be *the Answer of a good Conscience towards God,* *1 Pet. 3. 21.* to make it effectual: And let a Man be of what Church he will, *if he regard Iniquity in his Heart,* he is far from the Kingdom of Heaven, and his being of a better Church than others, through his own neglect, may prove an occasion of his receiving the greater Damnation.

Abstinence from gross and scandalous Sins, raises great Hopes and Confidence in others, and this indeed is Matter of some comfort, and is highly commendable in our degenerate Times, but it is but a part of Religion, if we hope to be sav'd, we must not only *Isa. 1. 16, 17.* *cease to do Evil, but learn to do well, and* *1 John 3. 3.* *purify our selves even as God is pure.*

Strictness in Fasting, long Prayers, Zeal for a Party, eager contending about abstruse Doctrine and Opinions, and nice Points and

Speculations, are things with which some others are deluded. But neither any one, nor all these things put together, will save a Man at the last Day. And therefore, as I said, let no Man think of commuting with God, or deceive himself with an Opinion, that God will accept of something else instead of sincere and universal Piety. Let us not content our selves with empty Shews and naked Professions, and external Devotion, but endeavour in all things to do the Will of God, according to that Revelation he hath made of it in the Gospel. This will give us Courage and Confidence in that Day when God shall reward every Man according to his Works.

2. If we desire to be truly Religious and Holy, we must take all possible care to excite and preserve the most worthy and honourable apprehensions and opinions concerning the Nature and the Will of God. If we consider him only as an Infinite Arbitrary Will, Armed with Almighty Power, laying a Law upon his Creatures, purely because he will do so, without any regard to their Nature and Capacities, such Opinion will strangely alienate our hearts from God, and prejudice us against our Religion. For who would serve, who can love a very rigorous and austere Master, enjoining unreasonable, severe and impossible Tasks, *who reaps where he did not sow, and gathers where he did not straw*? No, If we desire sincerely to serve God, and to do his Will, we must above all things consider him not only as the Greatest, but

but as the Best of Beings, and his Law as the Wisest Rule of Life, and not only possible, but through the Grace afforded us, easie to be performed. We must apply our selves to God, as to the *Father of Mercies* and the *God of all Comforts*, whose Eye is upon us, who desires and delights to do us good, and forbids us nothing but what would be hurtful to us, and commands nothing but what is for our real Interest. Who considers our Frame, and makes allowances for the Infirmities of our State, and is not extreme to mark what we have done amiss, but approves and cherishes the very first beginnings of Goodness, not *breaking the bruised reed nor quenching the smoking flax*, but encourages and rewards the first aspirings and tendencies of our Souls towards him. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of the times of the Gospel, represents God under the Character of a Good Shepherd who *feeds his Flock, and gathers the Lambs with his Arm, and carries them in his Bosom, and gently leads those that are with Young*. The meaning of which is, that he exercises a diligent Care over all his Flock, but shews a more special tenderness, a more peculiar affectionate indulgence towards them that are weak in proportion to their weak estate. Yea though they sometimes stray out of his Fold, and run away from him, such is his Goodness and Pity, that he does not neglect or cast off all care for them, but seeks them out, and brings them back again into it, with a

Luke 15. 6.

singular compassion, and with expressions of Joy, for the return and safety of the Sheep which were Lost. Yea so far is our good and gracious God, from discouraging the weakest endeavours of such as are sincerely desirous to please him, that many times he takes notice of a meer out-side, hypocritical Service, so as to lay aside his Wrath for the present, and reward it with Temporal Blessings: As appears from that well known case of *Ahab's Humiliation*. God seems with a sort of Joy to acquaint his Prophet with it, *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth him,*

1 King. 21. 29.

self? because he humbleth himself, I will not bring the evil in his days. An imperfect goodness goes not without a Reward. 'Tis recorded of *Abijah the Son of Jeroboam*, that he alone of his Seed should Die a natural Death, and have an Honourable Burial,

1 King. 14. 13.

because in him there was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel. Which I do not mention to encourage any to content themselves with an Hypocritical Partial Obedience, God forbid; but to take Men off from an opinion that it is to no purpose at all to do something of their Duty, if they don't do every thing, and to shew how kindly God receives even those that begin to look towards him. If a Feigned Repentance and Obedience meet with some favour; we may be sure the least sincere endeavours will be favoured with a more abundant Grace and Blessing.

2. Since God is thus good and gracious, and binds no hard and impossible Burdens upon

upon us, it becomes us to take heed of being too severe and rigorous towards our selves. We must not think that inveterate Habits of Sin can be broke off, or destroyed all of a sudden, and that we must presently arrive to a state of Perfection in Piety and true Goodness. It is true the sooner we can do both the better: But, alas, they are the work of time, and will require care and diligence, strong Resolutions and assiduous endeavours: We must not think to cut off all our corrupt Members at once, but as in other cases, must begin first with one, and then with another, having always a more heedful eye upon *the Sin which most easily besets us*, and begin with that first, and strive, and wrestle, and fight with it till we get the compleat Mastery over it. And so for the Attainment of Vertues, it is highly advisable, that we search our Hearts, and examine our Practice, and see where we are most defective, and endeavour first to supply and adorn our selves with that which is most wanting, and then go on to a second, and a third, and so forward, till we have put on the whole new Man, and are become *perfect Men in Christ Jesus*. The corrupt Nature, as I said adheres very close to us, is pressing and importunate, strong, lively and powerful, and is not to be mortified all at once, but we must first give it one Wound, and then another, and persevere in our Assaults, till we have destroyed it: And many Vertues lye so cross to some Men's Complexion and Inclinations, or worldly Interest,

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Heb. 12. 1.

Col. 3. 10.

Rom. 12. 2.

or Conversation, that there is no getting a Habit of them, but by many and repeated Acts and Exercises of them : It is in vain, especially for an old Sinner, to expect he should be transformed by the Renovation of his Mind and Practice, into a new Creature in an Instant. The Scripture represents Sin as the Disease and Sicknes of the Soul, and a Course of Vertue as its healthful State. But does any Man expect to recover from a chronical, lingring, inveterate Disease to a perfect State of Health of a sudden ? Will a Bone that hath been broken and set again, be as strong as it was before at its first setting ? Time is required to knit, unite and strengthen it. And it is thus in the Case of the Soul : Tho' a Man may very quickly be very wicked, yet no wicked Man can be exemplarily good, upon his first Endeavours to be so : I know it is not unusual with some young Penitents to hope for such a sudden Change, and therefore impose very hard and difficult Tasks upon themselves. Being deeply sensible of their former Mifcarriages, and great and heedless mispending of much precious time, which should have been carefully improved to God's Honour, and their own Encrease and Confirmation in Knowledge, Piety and Vertue, they are very forward and zealous to recover what they have lost, and to double their Diligence for the time to come : And this Fervour and Earnestness is very commendable, and of great Use where it is governed by Knowledge and a sound Mind. But for

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want of Discretion and Judgment, it becomes a Snare to them. As for Example; Some think they can never be too often upon their Knees, nor hear Sermons, nor read Chapters enough, and therefore pray by Measure, and read by Tale, and run from Church to Church, and confine themselves to a precise portion of Time, and an exact number of Chapters, resolving never to slip such an Hour, nor neglect to read such a determinate quantity of Scripture, without any Failure or Abatement of their stinted Measure. Now, though this kind of Zeal may be laudable in it self, yet it wants to be tempered and guided by Discretion. For it makes no Allowances for the meer Infirmities of Human Nature, and the many unforeseen and unavoidable Necessities of Life, which may be a very reasonable and innocent Impediment or a Vocation from the present Exercise of some positive Duties. And when these Beginners find the intolerable Burden of these Tasks which they have set themselves, they are either filled with vexatious Scruples and Disquiet, or discouraged from proceeding any farther in a religious Course which they find so perplexing, uneasy and tiresome, and break all these Bands with which they tied themselves, with greater precipitance and haste than ever they put them on. Now, is it not much better to begin as we may hold out to the end, and to proceed no faster than our Strength will bear, considering that uninterrupted Devotion and the Activity of pure Spirits

Spirits does not belong to us in this weak mortal State? Especially, it is at least a Matter of great Prudence to take heed of suffering our Resolutions in such Cases, to proceed to a strict and solemn Vow: For, I think, it is generally agreed, that it is seldom, if ever, advisable to make a strict and perpetual Vow concerning any thing, but what at all times is our Duty.

As Men must be cautious how they unnecessarily impose hard Tasks upon themselves, so they must take heed (especially such who have great Opportunities and Advantages of Improvement) how they content themselves with small and slender Attainments in Piety and Vertue. They should not be too nice in their Enquiries, how near they may approach to Sin without committing it, how close they may venture to the brink of the bottomless Pit, without falling into it, but keep at a due distance from it, *abstaining*
 1 Thef. 5. 22. *from all appearance of Evil, and hating the*
 Judg. 23. *very Garment spotted with the Flesh:* Such nice and scrupulous Enquiries, to say no worse of them, discover but an imperfect Dislike or Hatred of Sin, whereas we should hate it with an irreconcilable and perfect Hatred. So on the other side, it is very unbecoming solicitously to enquire what are the very least Measures and Degrees of Goodness, which will save us: We are obliged to strive after Perfection. Not flattering our selves that we are good enough already, or at least better than many others, but attend to our Rule, and set the best
 Patterns

Patterns before us: We should strive to imitate God and Christ, *to be perfect, as our Heavenly Father is perfect, holy as he is holy, merciful as he is merciful, pure as he is pure*; meek, lowly and patient, contented, and resigned to the Will of God, peaceable, kind and charitable towards Men, as our Saviour was. And though we can never attain to the Perfection of our Coppy, yet the more we set our selves to imitate it, we shall learn and excel the more, and approach the nearer to it. A Man by doing his best, enlarges his Power, gathers greater Strength, and advances higher and higher, till in some degree he attain to the measure of the Statute of the Fulness of Christ. But he whose Aims are low and Endeavours faint, can never attain to Eminency in Goodness. Every Christian should frequently call to mind those excellent words of the Apostle, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest or venerable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good Report, if there be any Vertue, and if there be any Praise, think on these things.* And he that thinks of them, and yet contents himself with slender Endeavours and small Attainments, is in a very ill Temper and State of Soul, that little Religion he pretends to, is either founded in Hypocrisy, or on unworthy Thoughts and Opinions of God and Religion. But,

Whosoever hath made some considerable Progress in Piety and Goodness, let him take heed

Mat. 5. 48.
 Luke 6. 31.
 1 Pet. 1. 16.
 1 John 3. 3.
 Mat. 11. 29.
 Phil. 2. 6.

Eph. 4. 13.

Phil. 4. 9.

heed of presuming upon his own Strength, by a needless exposing himself to Temptations. God knows, and Experience assures us, that *whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus*, shall not fail to meet with Temptations and Difficulties enough, without seeking of them. And it is well, if Men can resist and overcome those which, without any fault of their own, daily come upon them: The more cautious and watchful Men are, the less liable to be ensnar'd by them. But no Man is in greater danger than he that is presumptuous and self-conceited; 'tis a righteous thing with God to leave such a one in the hand of his own Counsel, and then how feeble and weak a Creature is he! what is there that will not be too hard for him! Let no Man therefore think himself so secure and safe, that he may remit of his Care, Diligence and Watchfulness, but still keep his Eyes open, and guard, if I may so speak, all the Avenues and Passes of his Soul, and watch all the Motions of his Enemies, regarding the Apostle's Exhortation: *Be not high-minded, but fear; and let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

Rom. II. 20.

1 Cor. 10. 12.

6. It is very requisite and necessary, that we heedfully distinguish between moral and positive Duties, and always give the Preference to the Moral. Where the present Exercise of a positive Duty, suppose Reading, Hearing or Prayer, will obstruct a present necessary charitable Action, there do the charitable Action, and refer the other positive

positive Duty or Duties to a more proper opportunity. And the Reason is plain, because positive Institutions were principally intended to promote the Practice of moral Duties, the sincere Love of God and our Neighbour, and are no farther valuable than as they conduce to the Furtherance of this great End. God prefers *Mercy before Sacrifice*. Obedience is more acceptable than Incense. And *to love the Lord our God with all the Heart, and with all the Understanding, and with all the Soul, and with all the Strength, and to love his Neighbour as himself, is more than all whole Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices*. All external Worship, how specious soever, if it do not dispose us to be more pious towards God, and righteous, and merciful towards Men, will turn to no Advantage at the Great Day of Account: But Truth, Justice and Mercy, and the Love of God and Men will not fail of a Reward.

Mat. 9. 13.

1 Sam. 15. 23.

Mar. 12. 33.

7. I must again advise you in all your Endeavours to a diligent and assiduous Use of Prayer, as a most necessary and very effectual Means to enable you to resist the Temptations of Sin, the World and the Devil, and to establish you in all well-doing to the Day of our Lord Jesus. And I am not afraid of using the Words of a very excellent Person, who directly asserts, *That no Man indeed can be a faithful Servant to God, a real Friend to Goodness, a serious Practicer of Duty, without a constant Tenor of Devotion*. Let us therefore pray with all Prayer and Suppli-

Eph. 6. 18.

*Supplication in the Spirit, and watch there-
unto with all Perseverance, whereby we may
stand fast in the Truth, nothing terrified by
Phil. 1. 9, 10. any of our Adversaries. And God grant
that our Love may abound more and more in
Knowledge, and in Judgment, that we may
approve things that are excellent, that we
may be sincere, and without offence, till the
Day of Christ, being filled with the Fruits of
Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ,
unto the Glory and Praise of God. Amen.*

A Morning Prayer for a Family.

O Eternal, and infinitely Glorious God, the Great Creator, Gracious Preserver, and Wise Governor of the World: We, thy unworthy Creatures, who are but Dust and Ashes, and less than the least of all thy Mercies, fall down before thee this Morning, with all Humility and Reverence, to offer our Sacrifice of Praise and Prayer to thy Divine Majesty. We admire and adore the incomprehensible Perfections of thy Nature, and gratefully acknowledge thy marvellous and undeserved Goodness towards us and all thy Creatures: We have nothing, O Lord, but what we have received from thee. Thou freely gavest us our Being, and madest us in a Capacity to know, serve and enjoy thee for ever: And out of the same free Grace and meer Goodness, thou hast continued to us the Being which thou at first gavest us, and hast made it easy and comfortable to us, by delivering us from a multitude of Evils which might have befallen us, and by bestowing Mercies and Favours upon us, both for our Souls and Bodies, more than we can number. Thy Eye

is continually upon us, and though we too often forget both thee and our selves, yet thou art mindful of us, and always willing, and never weary to do us good. O that we could, in some degree, make Returns unto thee again according to the Benefits we have received from thee, and employ all thy Gifts to thy Honour and Glory. But alas! we have been guilty of the basest Treachery and Ingratitude towards thee, the Fountain of all Good: We have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy Children: We have neglected our Duty, forfeited thy Favour, forsok our own Happiness, and thou mightest have glorified thy Justice upon us, by punishing us according to the desert of our Sins. But O the unsearchable Riches of thy Grace! thou hast magnified thy Mercy, in sparing us, notwithstanding our manifold Provocations, and hast restored us to a Capacity of Favour and eternal Happiness with thee: Thou sentest thy Son into the World to live among us, to die for us, to deliver us from the Wrath to come, and to make us Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. Affect our Hearts, we beseech thee, with such a due Sense of thy infinite

nite Love in Christ Jesus, as may constrain us to abhor and forsake all our Sins, and live to him who died for us, and to love thee and our Redeemer with all our Hearts, and with all our Soul, and with all our Strength. And since thou, O blessed Jesus, art the Great Lover of Mankind, grant that we may follow thy Steps, and for thy sake love our Neighbour as our selves. Assist us likewise with thy Grace, that we may ne'er forsake thee again by any wilful Acts of Impiety and Wickedness, but may always bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance, have a lively Faith in thy Mercy, be rich in good Works, walk worthy of our holy Calling, exercise our selves in Godliness, grow in Grace, and adorn the Doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things. Make us pure and chaste in all our Thoughts and Desires, sober, contented and thankful in all our Enjoyments, humble in our Opinion concerning our selves, charitable in our Censures of others, meek and patient under Provocations and Injuries, sincere and faithful, just and honest, pitiful and courteous, diligent and cheerful in our Business, discreet, inoffensive and blameless in our Conversation, and useful in

every Relation and Capacity of Life. Help us always to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man. Excite and preserve in us a firm and immoveable Perswasion of thy continual Presence with us, and that all our Thoughts, Words and Actions are open to thy all seeing Eye. Endue us with a quick and lively Sense of the Desert of our Sins, the Frailty of our Life, the Certainty of a Judgment to come, the Glories of Heaven and the Torments of Hell; and grant that, duly considering the vast Difference which is betwixt this Life and our eternal State, betwixt the Pleasures of Sin and that everlasting Fulness of Joy which is in thy Presence, we may pass the time of our Sojourning here in Fear and Trembling, unto the coming of the Day of God, and may be found of him in that Great Day without spot and blameless, and admitted to the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

We beseech thee likewise, O God, to be merciful to the whole World: Let the Knowledge of the Lord be spread over the Face of the Earth, and the Kingdoms of the World become the Kingdoms of thee, and of thy Christ. Especially grant, that all, who name
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the Name of Christ, may cease from Iniquity. Be gracious to these Kingdoms to which we belong: O that all Enmity and Faction, Irreligion and Profaneness, Sensuality and Uncleaness, Covetousness and Ambition might be rooted out of the midst of us: And that the Peace of God and brotherly Love, true Piety and Devotion, Temperance and Chastity, Humility and Charity might flourish among us to all Generations. Bless the King's Majesty with the Spirit of Wisdom and Counsel, and the Fear of the Lord, with Health and Honour, and many happy Years, and grant that under him we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty. Cloath thy Priests with Salvation, and make them wise and faithful Stewards of thy Mysteries, that so they may save themselves and those that hear them. Into thy hands, O Lord, we commit our whole selves, Soul, Body and Spirit, all our Concernments and Affairs, all our Relations, Friends, Acquaintance and Benefactors, beseeching thee to take care of them, and to bless them with all things pertaining to Life and Godliness.

Look down with Pity and Compassion upon such as stand in need of the Mercies we enjoy, and supply them according to their several Wants. Especially consider those who suffer for Righteousness sake. Support them with the Grace and Consolations of thy Spirit, and relieve and deliver them in that time and way which is most for thy Glory and their Good.

And now, O Lord, we thank thee for the Mercies of the Night past, and beg that thy Blessing may be upon us this Day. Preserve us from Sin and Danger, and strengthen us in all Well-doing. Direct, assist and prosper us in our Affairs. Suffer us neither to be sloathful in our worldly Business, nor yet so intent upon it, as to forget thee, our God, and the Salvation of our immortal Souls; but encline us to labour principally for that Meat which endureth to everlasting Life. All which Blessings, and whatsoever else thou seeest needful for us, we humbly beg of thee in the Name and Words of our blessed Lord and Saviour, who hath commanded us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.

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An Evening Prayer for a Family.

O Eternal, Almighty and most Gracious Lord God, the Great Creator and High Possessor of Heaven and Earth, who art excellent in Counsel, wonderful in Working, and beholdest all the Ways of the Sons of Men, but more especially regardest those who fear thy Name, and art nigh to them that are of a broken Heart, and savest such as be of a contrite Spirit: We, thy weak and worthless Creatures, in an awful Sense of our entire Dependance upon thee, for the Blessings of this present Life, and of the Life which is to come, present our selves, this Evening, before the Throne of thy Grace, to make known the Requests of our Souls unto thee, and to beg that thou wouldest not hide thy self from our Supplication. We confess, O Lord, with Shame and Confusion of Face, that we are unworthy to lift up our Eyes unto Heaven, and to speak unto thy Glorious Majesty, for we are disobedient Children, unprofitable Servants, having offended thee both in Thought, Word and Deed, whereby we have provoked thee to Wrath, and thou mightest just-

ly shut up thy loving Kindness in Displeasure, and make an utter End of us. But deal not with us, we beseech thee, according to our Sins, neither reward us according to our Iniquities, but pity and spare us, and forgive us the manifold Offences of our whole Lives, for the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, who came into the World to seek, and to save Sinners. Wash us thoroughly from our Sins, and restore us to thy Favour; and assist us so, by thy Grace, for the time to come, that we may walk in all well-pleasing before thee. Enlighten our Minds, more and more, in the Knowledge of the Truth, as it is in Jesus: Subdue the Perverseness and Obstinacy of our Wills, to a cheerful, vigorous and persevering Obedience to thy Will, which is always wise, and just, and good: Compose and govern our Passions, rectify our Affections, fix them chiefly upon the things which are above: Purify our Consciences from dead Works, to serve thee, the Living God: Encline us to think and meditate upon thy Word, that so we may retain that which is good, and have a lively Sense of our Duty continually present to our Minds. Help us to restrain and govern our carnal Appetites, avoiding
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all Lasciviousness and Intemperance, to keep our Hands from all Injustice, Violence and Deceit ; and to take heed least we offend with our Tongues by any corrupt, false, uncharitable, profane and ungodly Communication, but grant that we may always glorify thee, both in Soul and Body, which are thine. Dispose us to give all Diligence to add to our Faith Vertue, and to Vertue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Patience, and to Patience Godliness, and to Godliness Brotherly Kindness, and to Brotherly Kindness Charity ; whereby keeping our selves in the Love of thee, our God, we may comfortably hope for the Mercy of our Lord Christ Jesus unto eternal Life.

Hear likewise, O Lord, our Supplications in behalf of all Mankind : O that all the Nations of the Earth might acknowledge and worship thee, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and that the everlasting Gospel of thy Son might be preach'd, embrac'd and glorify'd throughout the whole Earth, and that all they, to whom thou hast revealed it, might have their Conversations agreeable to it. Especially be merciful to these Kingdoms, pardon our crying
Sins,

Sins, reform our Temper and Practice, unite our Hearts, cure our Divisions, remove the Evils we feel, prevent those we have most justly deserved, continue the Mercies we enjoy, deny us not those which we want, and make us a Praise in the Earth. More particularly we implore thy Blessing upon our Sovereign Lord, the King; be a Sun and a Shield to him, direct and protect him in his Government; encline his Heart to rule us in the Fear of the Lord, make him a Terror to Evil-workers, but a Nursing Father to thy Church and People. And grant, that all Orders and Degrees of Men among us may be Loyal and Obedient to him; and in their several Places and Callings, faithfully endeavour to glorify thy Name, and preserve and establish Truth, Righteousness and Peace among us. Be gracious to all our Brethren and Kindred according to the Flesh, and encline and enable them to do the Will of thee, our Heavenly Father, whereby they will become the Brethren and Kindred of Christ himself. Remember all that have done us good: Recompence them a hundred fold into their Bosome, especially shew Mercy to them in that Great Day, when they shall stand most
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in need of it. Have pittie on such as hate and injure us without a Cause, change their Hearts, forgive their Sins, that so they may be reconciled to thee, and become thine as well as our Friends. Be mindful of all the Sons and Daughters of Affliction, endue them with Patience under their Sufferings, help them to profit by them, and in thy due time give them Ease and Deliverance from them: however, take them not out of this World till they are prepared for Death, and meet for thy Heavenly Kingdom.

And, least our Unthankfulness, for the Mercies we have already received, should hinder the Success of our Prayers for our selves, or others, we return thee our most humble and hearty Thanks for all the Blessings thou hast bestowed upon us and the whole World: We thank thee for our Creation, Preservation, and all the Comforts of our Lives; but above all, for thy infinite Love in Christ Jesus, for the means of Grace, and for the hope of Glory. Especially at this time we thankfully acknowledge the Mercies of this Day: Blessed be thy Name, that thy good Providence hath preserved us, in some degree, from the Snare and Subtilty of the Devil, the Corruption of our own
Hearts,

Hearts, and the Temptations of the World; and that we have been enabled to do thee any Service. We thank thee for that Direction, Assistance and Success thou hast given us in our worldly Affairs: Let thy Blessing be still upon us, and receive us this Night under the Shadow of thy Wings: Thou who never slumberefst nor sleepest, watch over us for Good, and defend us from all Evil: Thou who givest thy Beloved Sleep, deny it not to us, but make it sweet and refreshing, whereby we may be enabled, if thou give us another Day, to promote thy Honour and Glory, and further the Salvation of our Souls. All which Mercies we humbly beg of thee, who art able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, in the Name of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.

*A Prayer for a Person of better Rank
and Condition.*

O Most Great and infinitely Glorious Lord God, who art wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in working, who

who madest all things for thy Self, and by thy Wise Providence hast appointed various Orders and Degrees of men, to promote thy own Glory, and to minister to one anothers Good: I thy unworthy Creature, in a gratefull sense of thy great and undeserved Goodness towards me, bow my self before thy Divine Majesty, unfeignedly desiring to give thee the Glory which is due to thy great Name, and to praise thee with my whole Heart, for all the Benefits, which from time to time, thou hast bestowed upon me. By thy favour, O Lord, I enjoy not only the Common Blessings of Life, but thou hast conferr'd many special Benefits, and singular Priviledges upon me. The happy advantages of a more worthy Parentage, a more ingenuous Education, greater Wealth, Reputation, Authority, and Leisure than many others enjoy, distinguish me from them, raise me above them, and put many happy opportunities into my hands, of serving thee, and improving my own Soul, more than they can do. But alas! I Blush, O Lord, and am ashamed when I consider, how slothfully I have either Buried or perversly misemployed and abused these Precious Talents, with
which

which thou hast graciously intrusted me. I confess, in the anguish and bitterness of my Soul, that through my own neglect and forgetfulness of thee, these thy Blessings have often become a Snare and a Temptation to me : Inclining me to Pride and Insolence towards my inferiours, to idleness, luxury and excess ; and for fear of the vain and foolish censures of Men, I have sometimes been prone to entice others to acts of intemperance and riot. Pardon, I beseech thee, O my God, all my Sins and failings, my Sins of Omision and Commission, and assist me by thy Grace, for the time to come, to employ all thy Gifts to thy Glory, my own, and others Good : Help me to employ the Leisure thou affordest me, to the adorning of my Mind with all excellent and useful knowledge, to use my Wealth with all becoming Prudence, Sobriety, Charity and Thankfulness, to exercise my Authority to the discouragement of Sin and Wickedness, and the promoting thy true Religion, and the establishment of Justice and Concord among us, and to employ all my Advantages to the Furtherance of those great and wise Ends for which thou hast bestowed them up-

on me. Never suffer me to forget thee in the midst of my Plenty, or to trust in uncertain Riches, but in thee, the living God. Encline me always to consider that I am one of thy Stewards, and must, one day, render an Accompt to thee, my Lord and Master: And grant, that being rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, I may lay up in store, for my self, a good Foundation against the time to come, and lay hold on eternal Life. All which Mercies I humbly ask of thee in the Name of thy Son Jesus^s Christ, our Lord, who commanded us, when we pray, to say,
Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for a Child.

ALmighty and most merciful Father, I am thy Creature, and of thy great Goodness have been Baptized into the Faith of Christ, and am bound to serve thee, my Creator, and my dear Redeemer, all the days of my Life: Teach me, I pray thee, the Knowledge of my Duty in the days of my Youth, and help me to do it as well as I am able. Suffer me not to follow that which is
evil,

evil, but that which is good. Encline me to hate Pride and Quarrellsomeness, Lying and Stubbornness, and to avoid evil Company, and make me dutiful to my Parents, obedient and thankful to my Teachers, humble towards all my Betters, careful in the choice of good Companions, gentle and kind to them, a Lover of Truth, and wise to Salvation. Continue to me my Health, and encrease my desire after good Instruction; make me apt to learn, and as I grow in Years, grant that I may grow in Knowledge and Goodness, and in Favour with thee and those among whom I live. Be good likewise, I pray thee, to all Men; but especially bless my Parents, Kindred, Teachers and Friends, and do thou requite all their Love to me. I thank thee, O God, for the Sleep thou gavest me the last Night; watch over me this Day, and keep me from all Evil, both in Soul and Body, and at the end of my Days bring me to everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say,
 Our Father, &c.

*At Night say
 thus,
 * the Preservation of me
 this Day; watch
 over me this
 Night, &c.*

A Prayer for a Servant.

A Almighty and everlasting God, the Great Lord and Wise Governor of the World, who takest care of all thy Creatures, neither despising nor overlooking any of the Works of thy Hands: I, the meanest of all thy Servants, present my self before thy Majesty, thankfully to acknowledge thy great Goodness towards me. I was created by thy Power, and am preserved by thy Bounty, and redeemed by the precious Blood of thy well-beloved Son. 'Tis of thy Goodness that I was Born of Christian Parents, received into thy Church by Baptism, and thereby have a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven. For these, and all other thy Mercies, I will praise thee with my whole Heart as long as I have any Being. I know, O Lord, thou hast deny'd me many outward Blessings which others enjoy: By thy Providence I am placed in the low Condition of a Servant, I cheerfully submit to thy Will, and rejoyce in this, that nevertheless I am thy Servant, and as my Talents are few, so at the Day of Judgment my Accompt will be the less: Suffer not

O the

the Meanness of my Condition to be a Snare and a Temptation to me. Remove all Envy and Discontent, Covetousness and Deceit far from me: Far be it from me to mispend that little I earn by my daily Labour upon my own Lusts or evil Companions, but encline my Heart to be so wise as to lay up something in store for my self, considering that Sicknes or old Age may overtake me. Endue me with Modesty, Humility and Contentedness of Spirit. Make me teachable and diligent in Business, obedient and faithful to my Master, serving him in Sincerity and Singleness of Heart, as becomes a Servant of Christ, striving to adorn the Doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things. And whereinfoever I have failed heretofore, be merciful unto me, and forgive me, and help me to shew greater Diligence, Faithfulness and Obedience for the time to come, and prosper all my lawful and honest Endeavours to thy Glory, and the Fartherance of my Master's outward Estate and Welfare.

Be merciful also to all Men, especially to all Christians; and in a particular manner do good to all my Relations and Friends, and reward them for all their
Care

Care of me, and Love towards me. Let thy Blessing be continually upon my Master and his whole Family, and all that belongs to him; and grant, that he and I, and all that name the Name of Christ, may in all our Thoughts, Words and Deeds glorify thee, our Master, in Heaven, who, without respect of Persons, wilt reward every Man according to his Works.

At Morning say,

And now, O Lord, I bless and praise thy Holy Name for the Mercies of the Night past: I thank thee, that thou hast brought me to the beginning of another Day; help me to employ all the time which thou givest me to the Honour of thy Name, and the Comfort and Salvation of my Soul, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

At Evening say,

And now, O Lord, I bless and praise thy Name for the Mercies of this Day; pardon whatsoever I have done amiss in it, and take me this Night into thy Care and Protection, give me comfortable Rest and Sleep, whereby I may be fitted for the Labours of the following Day; and grant, that whether I wake or sleep I may live together with thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer to be used some time before the Sacrament.

O Eternal and ever Blessed God, the Great Creator of Heaven and Earth,

O 2

Earth, the infinite and everlasting Fountain of all Goodness, who art exalted above all Blessing and Praise; the Perfections of thy Nature, the Greatness of thy Works, the Wonders of thy Providence far exceed all that I can say or think concerning them: But more especially I acknowledge and adore that incomprehensible Goodness and Wisdom which thou hast manifested in the Creation and Redemption of Mankind. Thou madest us excellent Creatures, in thine own Image, in Knowledge, Righteousness and true Holiness, and didst design us to a blessed Immortality. - But alas! we ungratefully and foolishly forfeited the Happiness to which we were design'd, and plunged our selves into a miserable State, by sinning against thee: But O the marvellous and unconceivable Love of God towards his Creature! Thou, of thy infinite Mercy, didst contrive a way to recover him from a State of Sin and Death, to a State of Holiness and Life everlasting. Thy Bowels did yearn towards us: When no Eye pittied us, when we had no pity for our selves, then thou hadst Compassion upon us; it pleased thee to send thy own Son into the World, to take our Nature upon him, to instruct

struct us in thy Will, to encourage us by his example, and at last to offer himself a Sacrifice, to appease thy Wrath, to put away our Sins, and reconcile us to thee: And with this Sacrifice, O God, thou art well pleased: For thy Sons sake thou art ready to forgive all our Iniquities, and heal all our Diseases: By his meritorious Performances, our Life is redeemed from Destruction; we are crowned with the Effects of thy loving Kindness and tender Mercies. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name: Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits. How can I forbear to proclaim the Wonders of thy Love! how can I refuse to shew forth all thy Praise! O the Stupidity and Bruitishness of my Heart; I confess, with Shame and Sorrow, that I have forgotten thee, my God, and my Saviour, day after day, and been unmindful of thine inestimable Love to Mankind in Christ Jesus. O that, for the time to come, the unsearchable Riches of thy Grace in Christ, might be frequently present to my Thoughts, and constrain me to live to him, who died for me, and rose again for my Justification. So great, O God, is thy Love towards us,

so mindful art thou of the Infirmities of our State, that it hath pleased thee to provide a Remedy for our Forgetfulness of thee and our dear Redeemer. Thy Son, our blessed Saviour himself, whilst here upon Earth, did appoint a solemn and standing Memorial of his Death and Passion, commanding us to eat Bread and drink Wine in remembrance of his Body which was broken, and his Blood which was shed upon the Cross, for our Redemption. I am invited by thy Minister shortly to commemorate this his dying Love, according to his own Institution. Grant that I may do it in such a manner as becomes so high and holy a Mystery, to thy Glory, and the Salvation of my Soul. Affect my Heart with a due Sense of all my past Sins and my present Infirmities; let no rebellious Lust, no unmortified Corruption abide or reign in me. Whereinsoever I have done amiss I resolve, O God, by thy Grace, to do so no more. Strengthen, I beseech thee, all my pious Resolutions, that they may end in sincere, universal and constant Obedience to thy Will. Work and confirm in me a lively Faith in a crucified Saviour, excite and inflame my Love to him, and, since he tasted
of

of Death for every Man, inspire me with charitable Affection towards all Mankind, especially towards all my Christian Brethren, and make me truly thankful for his infinite and condescending Love, in humbling himself to the Death of the Cross, for us. And being thus prepared in Mind, I am encourag'd, not trusting in my own Merits, but in thy great Mercies, to come to the Table of our Lord, unfeignedly desiring to be a Partaker of his Body and Blood, which alone can nourish me to everlasting Life; which I humbly beseech thee to bestow upon me, for thy Son's sake, who hath commanded us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

A Thanksgiving after the Sacrament.

Blessing, Honour, Glory and Power be unto thee, O God, who sittest upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Blessed be the Independent and Almighty Father, who sent his Son into the World, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.

O 4

Blessed

Blessed be the Eternal and Well-beloved Son, who was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by the shedding of his most precious Blood, the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, for us.

Blessed be the Eternal Spirit, who prepared a Body for our dearest Lord in the Womb of the blessed Virgin, and came from Heaven to assure us, that Jesus, who was dead, is alive again, and exalted at the right Hand of God, to be a Prince and a Saviour, and to confirm his Religion by a multitude of mighty Miracles, and to fill our Hearts with all Joy in believing.

I thank thee, O Lord, as well as I am able, for all the Wonders of thy Grace, and the Miracles of thy Love and Mercy towards the Sons of Men. More especially at this time, I admire and praise thy great Grace and loving Kindness towards me, thy unworthy Creature. Thou hast this Day admitted me to the Table of my Lord, and made me a Partaker of the Communion of his Body and Blood, the Sacrament of our Redemption, the Bond and Sign of Unity and Concord, the Earnest of thy marvellous Love, and a sure Pledge of a blessed Resurrection to immortal Life. What am I, O Lord, that thou

thou shouldst be thus gracious to me !
What shall I render unto thee for all
the Benefits thou hast bestowed upon
me ! I can make no Addition to thy
Glory and Happiness ; all that I can do
cannot profit thee, the most high God.
But nevertheless , according to my
bounden Duty, I have this Day devoted
my self entirely to thy Service ; I
have solemnly vow'd a sincere Love
and absolute Obedience to thee, in all
things. Make me continually mindful
of this my deliberate and solemn Vow,
and careful to keep it : And give me,
I beseech thee, such a measure of the
Grace of thy good Spirit, as may keep
me from all Evil ; make me perfect in
every good Word and Work, and pre-
serve my whole Spirit, Soul and Body
blameless to the Day of our Lord Jesus,
our alone Mediator and Advocate, in
whose blessed Name and Words I far-
ther call upon thee, saying,
Our Father, &c.

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